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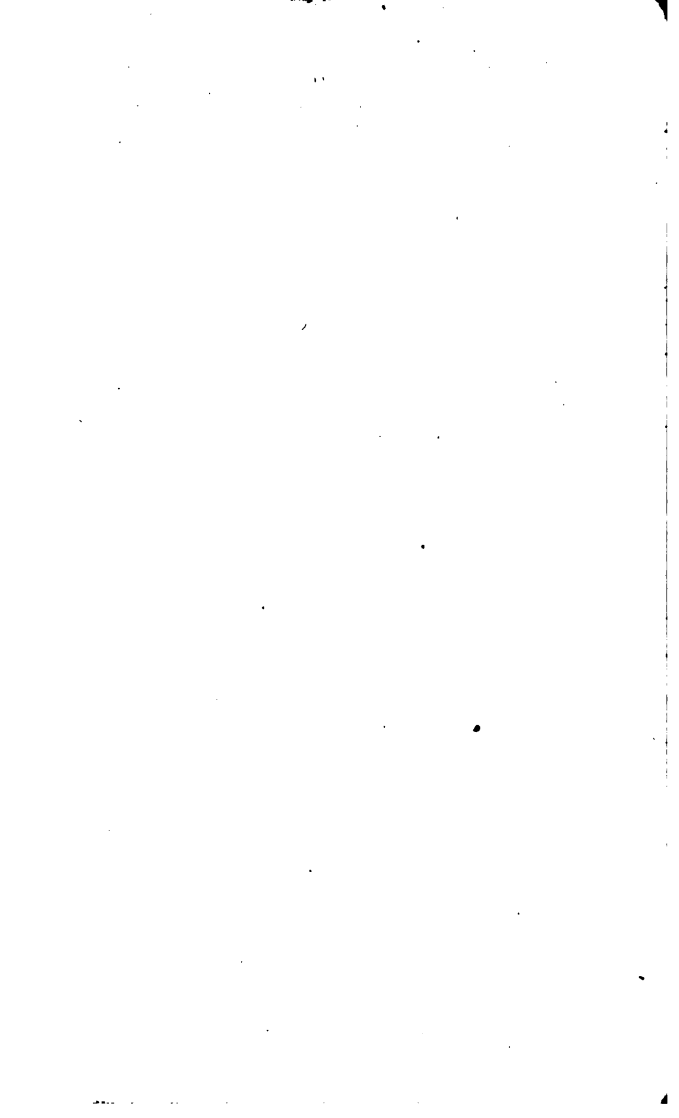
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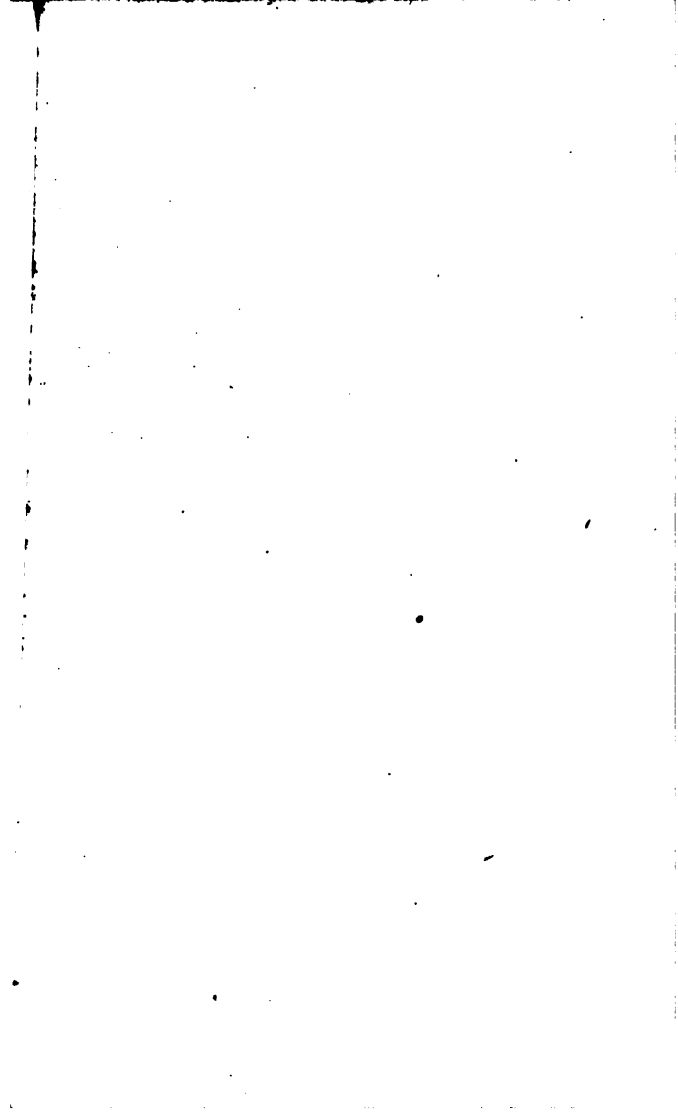
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ILLUSTRATING MIRROR

OR

A FUNDAMENTAL ILLUSTRATION

OF

Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

FOR ALL LOVERS OF THE TRUTH TO EXAMINE THEIR FAITH,
AND TO PROMOTE THEIR OBSERVANCE OF THE DOCTRINES
OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

BY JOHN HERR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

LANCASTER, PA.:
PUBLISHED BY ELIAS BARR & CO.
1858.

21333
(624)

1863. July. 23.

Gift of
the Publishers.

My son; give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. Prov. 23: 26.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. Ps. 25: 14.

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. Mat. 17: 5.

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken. Dent. 18: 15.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1: 17.

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Heb. 12: 25.

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Contains an elucidation or exposition of the eight blessings, as far as the 20th verse, wherein is clearly set forth the manner in which a man is led by grace from a state of humility, step by step, till he becomes a child of God, the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. 2. Six fundamental articles of proof. 3. A serious address to the reader's conscience. 4. A fundamental representation of Christ, and a warning to awakened and converted sinners, as also an exhortation to steadfastness for the consolation of their troubled souls. 5. An illustration of the manner in which Christ fulfilled the law for us.

CHAPTER SECOND,

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CHAPTER EIGHTH

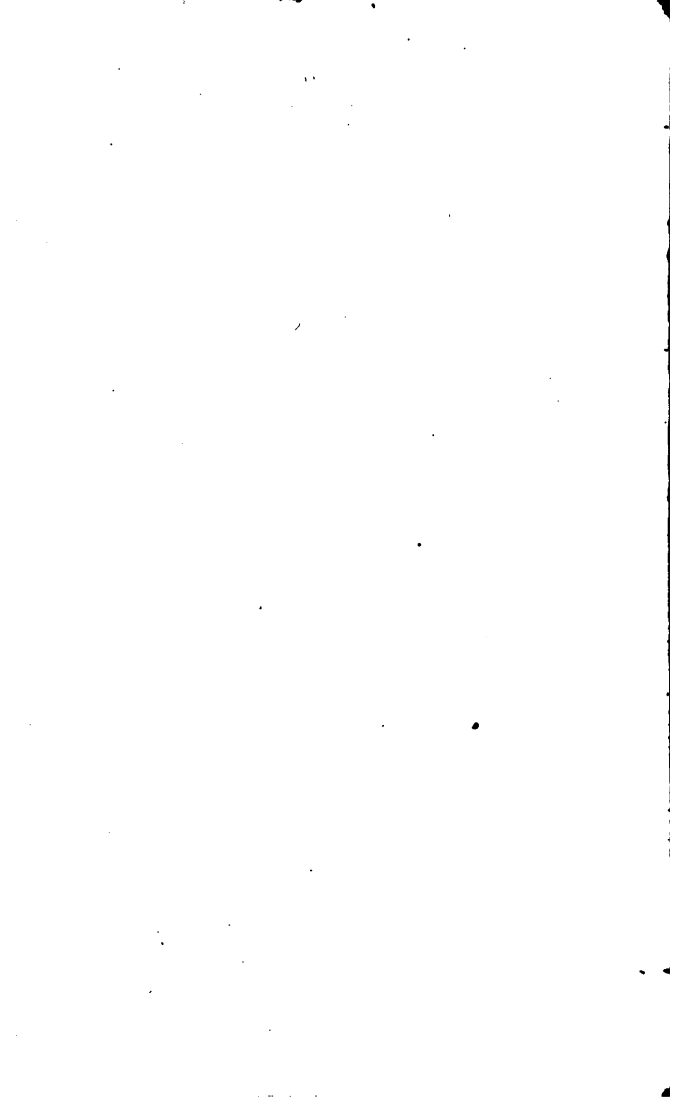
Embraces a portion from the 7th to the 15th verse. 1. It is shown how necessary the knowledge of ourselves is, if we would come to Christ. 2. That prayer is the means by which hungry souls draw nigh to Christ. 3. After the mystic death a man springs to life and becomes a new creature. 4. The life and increase of the new man consists in the spirit and gospel of Jesus Christ. 5. The reason why few are saved, is, that the gate is straight and the way narrow. 6. A representation of the great dangers a person is exposed to of being misled in regard to the reality of his conversion.

CHAPTER NINTH,

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CHAPTER TENTH,

An exhortation to my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, for the encouragement and edification of their souls, in which are brought into view the love of God, and its nature and disposition, and its operation in the souls that possess it.



in which every man may view himself and observe his shape, provided he proceeds correctly in the examination; for it contains, properly speaking, an illustration of Christ's sermon on the mount, which sermon every body will doubtless look upon as a mirror of all such christians as are dead unto the law and married unto another, namely unto him who is risen from the dead, inasmuch as in this discourse he has displayed before our eyes and hearts a doctrine which stands in direct opposition to our carnal desires and corrupted humanity. Hence so few are found in our time who regulate the conduct of their lives by this doctrine, or act in conformity with its requisitions; for they love the pleasures of this world more than they love God, although Christ himself, in the conclusion of his sermon, declares, Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it felt not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them

not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it. O that these words might sink deep into the hearts of all men; then would they not draw water any longer from the impure cisterns of human wisdom and corrupted writings, but they would resort to the true fountain of life, Christ Jesus, and draw from his doctrine the pure water of eternal life, which would become in them wells of divine wisdom springing up into everlasting life, and far transcending all the wisdom of this world.

Well, then, all ye fellow travelers to eternity, into whose hands this book may fall, peruse it in the spirit of true devotion, and criticise upon it not according to your own sentiments, lest it may become a savor of death unto death; but consider it well, and weigh it in the balance of God's word, and then, if you give ear to the testimony of Christ and his Spirit, and to the witness of your own conscience, it may become a savor of life unto life. Would to God that you can read it with

the same feelings and emotions, with the same openness of heart and mind, which, by the grace of God, I experienced while writing it; I rest assured it would then produce within you its blessed operation.

But to return: In this little book you will no doubt meet with doctrines which are not at all pleasing to your nature, and which will not quadrate with your carnal wisdom; this, however, must perish in you, or you cannot understand this discourse, for it must be spiritually discerned.

Now, I venture to say, that in this book there may be found medicine for every soul that knows how to make a proper use of it; for he who is impenitent and carnal-minded will have his dangerous disease pointed out, as also the means necessary to effect his recovery; nevertheless the medicines for diseases of the soul taste bitter and unpleasant, are acrid and pungent, so much so, that a person who is not sensible of the extreme danger of his sickness, will despise and murmur at them, and as a matter of course, will be unwilling to take them. Again, I am persuaded, that all who feel their sickness and

experience the pain of their sins, will employ the means prescribed for their cure. For these in particular, namely, for all health-seeking souls who are scattered abroad in the world, like sheep having no true shepherd, is my heart's concern, that I may serve them with my humble talents; for their salvation is near my heart, if, haply, I might win some to Christ, and promote their eternal felicity by means of this humble performance.

This work is likewise intended for all my beloved brethren and sisters in God, here and in other places, for admonition and self-examination, as also for their encouragement and consolation, so that every one may exert himself in order to please God, and walk worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ; for it is his will that we preserve our soul and body pure and undefiled from all the unrighteousness of sin and of false doctrine, that he may have pleasure in us; for it is his will that we render our members weapons of righteousness, and press forward with him, as spiritual soldiers, in the contest against the world, the devil, sin and the flesh. But this appears in

the eyes of the world to be an irksome and laborious life, yet to pardoned souls it is a pleasant and heart-quickenin^g life, which they bring forth, after godliness, in the mind and disposition of the Lord Jesus; for they are the good trees which bring forth no corrupt fruit; they are the fruitful branches in the vine Jesus, which can bring forth no other fruit (if they abide in him) than what partakes of the nature of the vine; for they are meek and lowly of heart; they are spiritual and spiritually minded; they are peaceable and patient, merciful and compassionate; their hatred is changed into love, their envy into forbearance, their life is pure and undefiled, their words are gracious, serving for edification; their yea is yea, and their nay, nay; they resist not evil by force; they contend not by law in temporal concerns, but much rather manifest love towards those who inflict injuries upon them, by doing them good, and even praying for them; they impart freely to persons in need and distress; they walk forward within the pale of godliness, nor ever stop till they arrive at the boundary of perfection; in

the contest they divest themselves of every encumbrance, lest, being overcome, they should lose the crown of life.

This must be the tenor of our life on this side the grave, if we think of inheriting with Christ, in the regions of bliss, the never fading crown of everlasting life, as may be seen in the connection of Christ's sermon on the mount.

But this is the cost which we are to count, and the great and momentous undertaking, concerning which it is incumbent upon us to sit down and consider fully and dispassionately, whether we shall ever be able to accomplish it. Christ and his doctrine must serve for the foundation upon which the whole building is to be laid and the superstructure erected; and for this purpose (inasmuch as we are too poor of ourselves, either to commence this edifice, or bring it to a state of completion) we are necessitated to secure the kind assistance of God, and obtain the right and privilege of entering his treasury and taking out such funds as may be found requisite for the carrying on and completion of this vast and important design. That is to

say, the way to the compassionate heart of Jesus must be opened unto us by faith towards God, that we may receive from the heart of Jesus, out of the rich treasury and fulness of God, grace for grace, by which we are enabled to complete the whole in the most firm and substantial manner; so that neither the tempests of the devil, nor the rains and floods of temptation, which beat upon this edifice, shall be able to prevail against it.

But if we are desirous of finding the way to the heart of Jesus, it is necessary for us, in the first place, to discover our poverty, our inability, and our incompetency either to begin of ourselves or superintend this spiritual building, which Christ in the introduction of his sermon plainly presupposes, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This humility and deep self-abasement must be firmly grounded in us, so that we may place no reliance upon ourselves, which Paul, the wise, deeply skilled and highly enlightened architect, was well acquainted with from experience; for he says, our sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of God. He was able to do all things only through

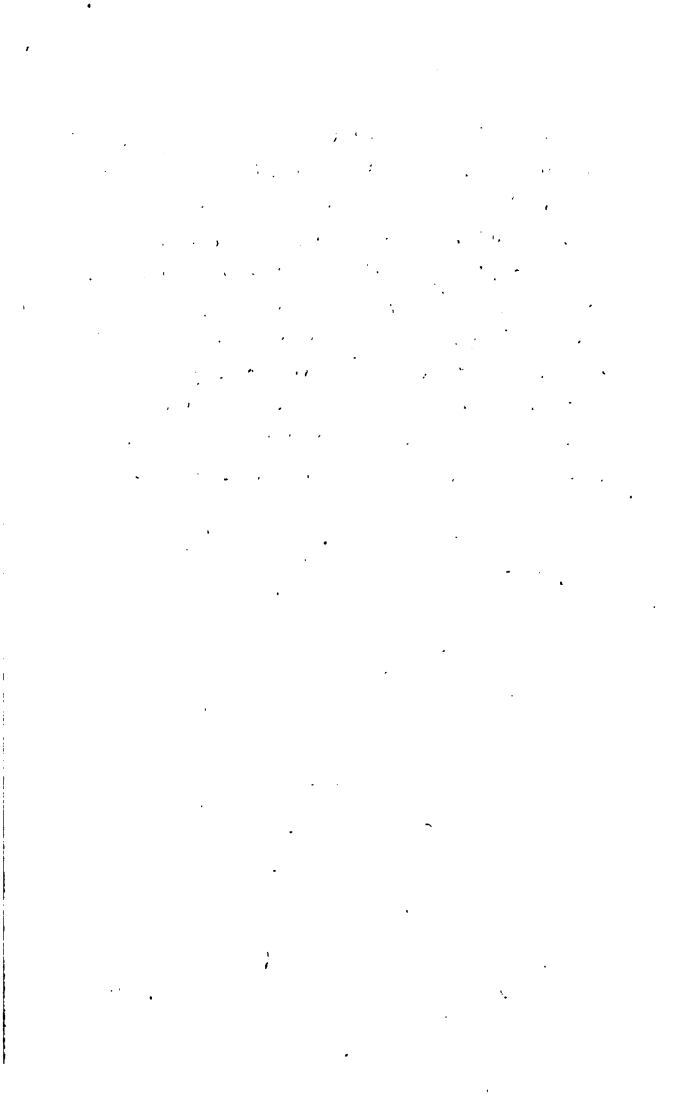
him that strengthened him, namely Christ, by whose word and spirit he was rendered wise, skilful, and competent for the erection of this spiritual edifice, and has become a shining example for our imitation. So that we should take heed how we build upon this foundation, having Paul and the other apostles for examples, by which we can see how we ought to build; for as they followed Christ, so ought we, having their example, to follow him also, that we may have part with him, and he become our all, so that he may work all things in us, both to do, to speak, and to urge on according to his good pleasure. O how glorious and god-like is that soul who remains quite nothing and insignificant in her outward nature, so that Christ, residing in her inward part, may direct and influence all her movements. What a sweet and heavenly rest does she not find in her Saviour, who has chosen her as the place of his abode. Here the sensuality of the outward man vanishes entirely away, for now the soul esteems entirely as folly all carnal and philosophic wisdom, and goes on increasing by continued accessions of glory in the presence of the Lord Jesus; in

consequence of which she is enabled, according to the doctrine of Christ, to try the spirits, whether they are of God, or whether they make a glorious display, in semblance of the light, by means of signs and lying wonders and a deceptive exhibition of power. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1 Cor. 1:25.

Therefore, friends and fellow travelers to eternity, I come unto you in this little book, not with high sounding words or profoundness of wisdom, by which to make known to you the gospel of God; but I have endeavored, according to the pleasure of God, by the foolishness of preaching, to be instrumental in promoting the happiness of them that believe. For God knows, I seek in this no honor from men, nor any earthly gain; but I desire from my heart, through much prayer and supplication to God, that many of those who are yet shut up and imprisoned in Babylon, may be enabled to embrace the doctrine of Christ, and become heirs of eternal salvation.

Now, I give heartfelt thanks to the everlasting mercy of God for his grace, in permit-

ting the light of his Spirit to shine abroad in the hearts, and the word of life to take root in the souls of many, so that the true faith begins to flourish, and the truth of the gospel to beam forth and be received and embraced by many. Oh, may the bountiful and all-wise God bless his word and render it fruitful, not only here in our own land, but in all regions and countries, to his everlasting praise and the glory of his great name here in time, through Jesus Christ to all eternity. Amen.



THE ILLUSTRATING MIRROR.

CHAPTER FIRST.

This chapter comprises first, an elucidation or exposition of the eight different blessings, as far as the 20th verse, wherein is clearly set forth the manner in which a man is led by grace from a state of humility, step by step, till he becomes a child of God, the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. 2. Six fundamental articles of proof. 3. A serious address to the reader's conscience. 4. A fundamental representation of Christ, and warning to awakened and converted sinners, as also an exhortation to steadfastness, for the consolation of their troubled souls. 5. An illustration of the manner in which Christ fulfilled the law for us.

I.

THE Lord Jesus says, Matthew 5: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

This is the state of mind with which a person must be made acquainted, before he is meet for the kingdom of God, or fit for the gospel of Christ; for the kingdom of God must be manifested in us through grace; and before it is manifested in us and received by us, the kingdom of Satan must be destroyed, the

strong man must be divested of his armor and deprived of his spoil; we must be stripped of all our self-imagined and false righteousness, which, out of self-love and self-complacency, we lay claim to by reason of our own good works; our self-will, self-love and self-sufficiency must be done away; all the weapons of self-efficacy must be destroyed; for as long as we retain these things in possession, we are not poor in spirit; we are yet rich in ourselves, and unconscious that we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, (Rev. 3: 17); and in this wretched condition we rest satisfied; for self-love, like a subtle and luciferian serpent, has so blinded us, that we do not perceive the clear light of the gospel reflected from the brightness of Christ; and therefore Jesus calls upon and counsels us to purchase of him gold tried in the fire. For all which we do not receive from him, is but earth and dross, nay, a futile and damnable vanity, for which a man should have a just abhorrence; nay, he should abandon his selfish principles, forsake his imaginary riches, and cast away his false righteousness, which is but a filthy and unclean rag, (Isaiah 60: 6,) and go to Christ, his faithful counsellor, and obtain from him the gold of precious faith, refined in the fire of grace, and, by virtue of the same faith, put on the pure and white robe of righteousness, applying to his heart the eye-salve of the Holy Spirit, that

he may have a light constantly shining on his path, whereby he may be enabled to walk and watch, and keep his garments, lest he walk naked.

For as much as it is evident, that man is by nature sinful, impure, blind and ignorant in spiritual things, and estranged from the life that cometh from God, Christ hath appeared as the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1); which light is continually striving, in order to convince men and open their eyes to a sense of their miserable condition, that they may be made partakers of eternal felicity. But if a man persists in shutting the door of his heart, and hardens himself in sins, loving them more than his own soul, or him who created heaven and earth and all that is therein; if he walks according to the will of the flesh and the light of reason; if he will not receive the love of the truth, that he may be saved: then God at length sends him strong delusions, that he shall believe a lie; that all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess. 2: 11, 12.

But when, on the contrary, a man opens his heart to the reception of this saving grace, and permits the light of Christ to shine in upon his soul; then the land of darkness and gloom will be illuminated, according to the saying of the prophet: "The people that

walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation and not increased the joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. Is. 9.

Now, my dear friend, awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light, (Eph. 5: 14); and when he illuminates the dark recesses of thy heart, and discovers unto thee the perverseness of thy way while sitting in the shadow of death, and begins to guide thy feet in the path of peace, (Luke 17: 9,) then wilt thou shudder at thyself and perceive, through the medium of this light, the enormity of thy guilt; yea, thou wilt be convinced that thy evil passions raged like a tempestuous sea, and that out of thy heart proceeded evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, and the like evil things, which have defiled thee. Mark 7: 21, 22. Here, my reader, thou art led to a discovery of the sinful nature of thy former life; which circumstance does not excite thy joy, but produces a far greater sorrow and anguish of heart before the Lord; for thou

seest with open eyes, that thy sins have separated thee and thy God ; that in consequence of this separation, thou hast nothing to look for but death and eternal destruction, unless thou findest an atonement in the mediation of the Lord Jesus, which thy soul longeth for with anxious prayers and tears, if haply thou mightest incline him to pity, that he may speedily impart the gift of his grace. If thou dost not obtain thy request immediately, thou wilt perhaps get discouraged and think that God does not hear thy prayer ; but remember that God setteth thee, first, under the law, as a schoolmaster, who chastises thee, displays in vivid colors the terrors of damnation, and keeps thee shut out from the faith which should afterwards be revealed ; for the law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we may be justified through faith. Gal. 3 : 23, 24.

At the same time Satan approaches, and smiting and wounding us with his deadly and poisonous darts, endeavors to rob us of all our faith, and make us doubt, or entirely to deprive us of the grace of a compassionate Jesus, whereby we may remain a prey in his hellish grasp. And the better to effectuate this, he overwhelms such a troubled person with a flood of evil and impure thoughts, yea, oftentimes with abominable blasphemies ; and this at the time of his best services, as prayer, reading and meditation ; which thing gives

rise in his mind to so great horror, that he does not know which way to turn himself; for, thinks he, how shall I obtain grace of God, whom in my thoughts I blaspheme, and unto whom I am unable to address a prayer of faith; and what is not of faith is sin, (Rom. 14: 23,) and he that asketh doubting, receiveth nothing. James 1: 6, 7. Here the combat rages, here the soul is oppressed with the slavery and bondage of Pharaoh or the devil; Christ now is willing to release the soul and bring it into the land of promise, but before this can be accomplished, our nature has to be afflicted by the rod of Moses with many sufferings in the land of Egypt, till at length our innate and sinful propensities be exterminated by the hand of the destroying angel, and our souls be preserved by the blood of the Lamb, which produces reconciliation. Then the soul takes her departure and enters with gladness upon the happy journey towards the land of promise. But in a short time she reaches the wilderness, and soon after arrives at the Red Sea of redemption, in which she shall be released from her primitive bondage; through this sea she must now pass, but is not yet able to discover any possible way, because the mysteries of God are not yet revealed. And now there occur new proofs, new temptations, new anguish and new trials, in order to test our weak faith; for Satan menaces the soul with utter destruction, and

this causes her to cry the more earnestly unto God and long for his assistance, who at last opens unto her the way of faith through the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which the soul finds a heretofore incredible deliverance from all the temptations by which she had been held in bondage; nor can she refrain from blessing and praising God, for she sees now that the yoke of her burden, the staff of her shoulder and the rod of her oppressor are broken; she joys according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. Isaiah 9. Yea, at this time she can by no means believe that she shall soon find bitter water, new temptations and a want of consolation; all which, notwithstanding, will have to be encountered; nay, a spiritual warfare will have to be maintained against the world, the flesh and the devil, which must all be subdued by faith; and an entrance thus made into the land of promise; Jericho must be destroyed and the Canaanites slain; the inhabitants of the land, who are proscribed by the Lord, must be rooted out, extirpated and made tributary; that is, all our carnal lust and sinful impurity must be utterly destroyed and brought in subjection to the spirit, that at length Jerusalem, the city of peace, may be built up within us, the sanctuary and temple be consecrated by the peaceable Solomon, Christ Jesus, and thus we

become the temple of the Holy Ghost, wherein God may move and dwell. 2 Cor. 6.

These are the means by which God strips, divests and humiliates us, that we may stand before him comfortless, void of counsel and destitute of help, and in this humility of spirit may exclaim with Saul and say, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? or with those on the day of Pentecost, What shall we do, that we may be saved? Acts 2. All the destitute and poor in spirit, who have despaired of their own strength and former services, who have sought counsel from the Lord alone, and become desirous of living according to his will, have attained the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore Christ says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matt. 11:28, 29.

A person thus poor in spirit, discovers salvation in no other name but the name of Jesus; for which reason he approaches him with all his burden, desiring grace, not only to become happy, but grace to bear his yoke, and follow him wherever he goeth. For he looks now unto Christ, and desires medicine of him, in order to be cured of his sickness, like the woman who had the issue of blood. Matthew 9. Mark 5. Hence he will soon

hear, Thy faith hath made thee whole; be it unto thee as thou wilt. Reader, I wish thee to mark, that herein thou canst perceive, that real humility of spirit constitutes the entrance to the gospel; for what poverty did not Christ undergo for our example! and what humiliations and temptations did he not sustain in the wilderness, after the baptism of repentance, before he entered upon his ministry! For though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 2 Cor. 9. Yea, by reason of the poverty and temptations which he suffered, he is become compassionate towards our weakness, and a faithful high priest to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Heb. 2: 17. Chap. 4: 15. Therefore Christ commenced his sermon on the mount in these words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" for he was well aware that the Jews were rich in themselves; because they considered themselves the children of Abraham, and placed their reliance in the law, seeking to attain that righteousness by the works of the law, which is attained by faith alone. Rom. 9. Hence he signified to them, that it is only upon the poor in spirit that he bestows his kingdom; that he is come to seek those only who feel in themselves that they are lost, to heal none but the sick, (Matt. 9: 12. Luke 5: 31, 32.)

to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison door to them that are bound; as is plainly shown us in the gospel. Luke 4: 18, 19. Isaiah 61: 1.

Now, Christ has exhibited in his sermon eight different blessings, to serve as a mirror, in which we professing christians may see whether we have become partakers of the same, and having passed by saving grace through these grades of blessings, are born peaceable children of God. For these blessings must succeed one another, and be wrought up in us unto a true life of faith in God, through Christ Jesus, that we may, in truth, be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Christ says, first:—

1. *Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Verse 3.

O glorious promise! But can so poor a creature believe this? Nay, almost any thing better than this; for he considers himself entirely too poor and unworthy; he smites his breast much more and prays, God be merciful unto me a sinner, (Luke 18: 13,) or says with the lost son, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. Luke 15. From this humility of spirit, and lowliness of heart, proceeds the second blessing:

2. Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted. Verse 11.

O glorious promise to all those troubled souls, who, through humility of spirit and deep self abasement, with anxious sorrow and mourning, lie in their wretchedness before God, waiting for his help, until in them be fulfilled what was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not faint." Isaiah 40: 31. Yea, to all such mourning souls he says: "Fear not, for I am with you: be not dismayed, for I am your God: I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness, (chap. 41: 10): For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. Chap. 54: 7, 8. But can such a bruised reed, or such a smoking flax believe this? Ah! no; for judgment is not yet sent forth unto victory. Matt. 12: 20. God, in the progress of his spiritual work, plants, rears and supports us in humility and sorrow of heart, that the honor may not be unto us, but the praise unto God, (2 Cor. 3: 5,) who continually carries on his work within us; for from this humility and sorrow of heart there will arise meekness.

3. Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth. Verse 5.

O precious promise! that a man has in meekness been so far renewed in the image of God, that, by reason of the mild nature or disposition of Christ, which he has already acquired in humility of spirit and godly sorrow, he can rule and inherit the earth, by which, in compliance with his carnal will, he was held so long in bondage. Such a person can find no resting place here in his godly progress, but as a stranger and pilgrim in the earth, he presses on with great ardor towards the mark for the heavenly prize, hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of Christ. Phil. 3: 14. 1 Pet. 2: 11.

4. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.* Verse 6.

O glorious promise to all those hungry and thirsting souls, who hunger no more after the world, to be delighted therein, whose affections are no longer set upon things on the earth, namely, the lust of the flesh, the delight of the eye, and the pride of life, temporal pleasure and worldly honor; but hunger after, and seek for, those things which are above, where Christ is, on the right hand of God (Col. 3: 1, 2); for they are dead, in humility of spirit, unto the world and all false righteousness, and their life (which remains yet in weakness) is hid with Christ in God, (verse 3); so that they live no more unto themselves, but unto Christ, who died for them and rose

again. 2 Cor. 5: 15. Rom. 14: 7. Wherefore Christ is their life, and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. Col. 3: 4. This is the consolation for all hungering souls, that they shall at length be satisfied and be filled with all the fulness of God, (Eph. 3: 19); hence they wait with patience till the time arrives when they shall receive the rich treasure which is poured out to them through the promises; at the same time they look back with eyes of pity and hearts of compassion upon their fellow men who take delight in the frivolity of the world, and would fain see them forsake the vain and transitory pleasures of this life for the enjoyment of eternal felicity in Christ Jesus. For they are convinced that there is no happiness but in following Jesus and seeking his righteousness, which is, notwithstanding, proffered to all who come forward and yield themselves up to the discipline of saving grace, deny their ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, (Tit. 2); for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 1: 11.

When a man has lost, in humility of spirit

and godly sorrow, all his own strength, self-righteousness and honor, and has been made sensible of the divine power of the nature of Christ, by which he is enabled to hunger and thirst after the righteousness which Christ has acquired for him, then he longs and sighs, waits and hopes, believes and loves, till it pleases God further to impart his heavenly treasures, for which he continually hungers and thirsts ; for blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

5. Blessed are the merciful ; for they shall obtain mercy. Verse 7.

By this hungering after the spiritual riches in Christ Jesus, a man acquires charity and compassion towards his fellow creatures whom he sees living in blindness, not thinking of the salvation after which he himself hungers ; he is tenderly inclined by compassion and love for their souls, to pray for them, that God may open their eyes and turn them from darkness to his marvellous light ; for such a person desires that all men may see what he sees, and seek what he seeks, that they may with him be eternally happy. But when, in opposition to his wish, he finds nearly every where the very reverse of this, and has suffered much gainsaying from his friends and relations ; then do vexation and sorrow take possession of his heart, and he exclaims with Jeremiah, " O that my head were waters, and

mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Jer. 9: 1. Yea, he prays for his enemies; he renders good for evil; he blesses in his heart those that curse him; he commits himself to him that judgeth righteously, according to the example of his Lord, (1 Pet. 2: 23. Chap. 4: 19); for this is the true consolation and precious promise given by Christ, under the influence of which the soul is soothed into calm and quiet resignation. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. O what compassion! It cleanses the heart, it sanctifies the soul through the blood of Jesus, wherewith our conscience is purged from dead works to serve the living God. Heb. 9: 14.

6. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. Verse 8.

Here a man is filled with joy in the contemplation of God; here he beholds the new and living way which entereth into that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Heb. 6: 19, 20. A man perceives now through faith the satisfaction, the righteousness, the mediation and the atonement of Christ by the offering up of himself for our sins; he is sensible that Jesus is made unto us the wisdom of God for redemption, for justification and for sanctification. 1 Cor. 1: 10. 2 Cor. 5: 21. Yea, he

perceives that God is reconciled unto him by the death of his son, and that like a faithful father he has not spared his own son, but has given him up for us all. He now discovers that God is willing, with Christ, freely to give him all things, (Rom. 8 : 32) yea, exceeding abundantly above all that he asketh or thinketh, according to the power that worketh in him, (Eph. 3 : 20) by means of which he begins to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of his love; and also to know the love of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that he may be filled with the fulness of God (Eph. 3: 18, 19); and in this new and living way that entereth within the vail, he sees the sanctuary of God, the mercy seat of Christ, where the Lord speaks free the soul and gives her heavenly peace. And,

7. Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. Verse 9.

O, it doth not yet appear what they shall be; but when he shall appear they shall be like him, and see him as he is; and having this hope in them, they purify themselves, even as he is pure. 1 John 3: 2. For the peace of God surpasses all human wisdom and understanding; it softens and quickens the heart, causing it to abound in love towards God and man; it enables a man to love his greatest enemies and to pray sincerely for them, even if they should persecute him and

put him to death. Acts 7: 59. Luke. 23: 34. And, as they love God, they are conscious that all things will work together for their good, (Rom. 8: 28) and reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them; (chap. 8: 18,) for they are now justified by faith and have peace with God, through their Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also they have access by faith unto this grace wherein they stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5: 12); and not only so, but they glory also in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. (Verses 3, 4, 5.) Therefore they rejoice, inasmuch as they are partakers of Christ's sufferings (1 Pet. 4: 13); for

8. *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Verse 10.

O precious promise to all the suffering children of God! for what should they desire more than the kingdom of God, to be with Christ and behold his glory which he had before the foundation of the world, and to sing with apostles and prophets, with angels and seraphim, the song of redeeming love, the everlasting hallelujah unto God and the Lamb.

in the new Jerusalem, where there is no need of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of any star, but the glory of God enlighteneth it. Rev. 21: 23. O, should not this strengthen them in time of their tribulation! Should it not constrain them to exclaim, "What shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, angels or principalities, or any other creature? O no! nothing, nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8. For blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so they persecuted the prophets which were before you. Verse 11. This is the consolation which is held out to such persons; for which reason they possess their souls in patience, knowing that God will bring their works unto judgment; wherefore they commit all things unto him who will judge righteously, and reward every man according to his deeds.

Now Christ may well say to all persons, who, being peace-makers, are sanctified in God, Ye are the salt of the earth, yea, the costly spice which possesses the power of preserving the wide extended and sinful world; for had God found but ten righteous men in Sodom and Gomorrah and the adja-

cent cities, he would have spared all those places for the ten's sake. Gen. 18.

Had not the children of God, in the first age of the world, become carnal-minded, uniting themselves with the posterity of Cain, God had never destroyed the world; but since the salt had lost its savor, wherewith could God season it? It was thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Even so in this age of the gospel; as long as this salt retains its savor, so long will the world stand; but when Christ shall find no more faith, when love shall wax cold, when it shall come to pass as at the time of Noah, when all flesh took their own way; and as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they married and were given in marriage, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, they committed all kinds of Sodomitish abominations, (Luke 17) which exist at this time to so alarming an extent; then shall Christ appear in glory with his saints, and be admired in all them that believe, and in flaming fire shall take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. 2 Thess. chap. 1.

II.

Wherefore, beloved man, awake and learn:

from the above mirror whether thou hast experienced this humility and sorrow of heart. If thou hast not had this experience, but remainest in thy natural state, although thou hast been baptized and art a professor of this or that religion, it will not profit thee the least; for thou art yet in thy uncleanness, and unto them that are defiled is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled, being abominable and unto every good work reprobate. Tit. 1: 15, 16. For so long as thou remainest in thy original impurity or in the old creature, and sufferest not thyself to be brought by the salutary chastisement of grace unto a life of godliness, separated from the world and founded in humility of spirit, all thy reading, praying, singing, going to church, all thy imagined religious exercises, almsgiving, and such like things, are but sin, inasmuch as they constitute nothing more than an appearance of righteousness; for which thou shalt receive a more severe condemnation, as Christ said to the pharisees, Wo unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without, but are within full of dead men's bones; for a pretence ye make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater condemnation. Matt. 23.

My dear reader, if thou imaginest that thou hast experienced this humility of spirit, and suffered tribulation for thy sins, examine thy-

self well, notwithstanding, whether thou hast attained unto a true meekness, and by means of it possessest the earth and hungerest and thirstest aright after the righteousness of God ; or whether thou dost not yet remain in bondage ; whether the earth does not exercise its authority over thee ; whether thou dost not love the creatures more than God, namely, houses and land, gold and silver, wife and children, friends and relations, &c., nay, even thyself. If it is the case that thou lovest these things more than thy Saviour, taking more delight in them than in him, and having thy thoughts more occupied with them than with thy Jesus ; then thou hast no part with him, thou dost not hunger and thirst as thou oughtest after righteousness ; for a man who has attained humility of spirit, gives up all ; all these temporal things he freely offers unto God, because he is sensible that they are gifts bestowed upon us by the Almighty for the relief of our temporal wants, in the enjoyment of which we should recognize the goodness of God, and render unto him unfeigned thanks for all his gifts, but should not feast our souls upon these things, nor receive from them our chief delight ; but our treasure should be laid up in heaven, our comfort and our joy should be in the law of the Lord, both day and night (Ps. 1 : 2. 112 : 1) ; our spiritual meat should be to do the will of Jesus. John 4 : 34, and 6 : 27. Therefore, search thy heart, and scan

thyself well in the six following articles of examination, learn the state of thy mind, and discover the tendency of thy desires.

1. Examine thyself when thou awakest from thy sleep. Where are thy thoughts? Canst thou say with the prophet, In the way of thy judgment, oh Lord, have I waited for thee; the desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee; with my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early (Isaiah 26: 8, 9); or with the prophet king, When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, I praise thee, (Ps. 63: 7,) my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise, all the day long. Ps. 35: 28. Dost thou trust in God at all times, and pour out thy heart before him? and is God alone thy refuge? Ps. 62: 9. If this is the case with thee, God will be a present help in every time of need, and will comfort thee, filling thee with all the fullness of God.

2. Examine thyself when employed in thy daily calling. Is even then thy mind engaged with God, that thou mayest do something for thy poor soul? Or are thy thoughts chiefly absorbed in endeavors to provide for the body, which quickly passes away, or in the acquisition of the riches and treasures of this world? If the latter is thy condition, thou hast not hungered aright after righteousness;

the one thing needful is still wanting (Luke 10:42); thou art still encumbered with viewing thy land and oxen; thou art yet bound unto a wife; and therefore thou art prevented from being present at the feast of the Lord. Luke 14. Thou art yet rich in thy own good things, for which cause thou remainest destitute of the good things of Christ. Luke 1:53. Thou art yet full of the world, therefore it is said, Wo unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Luke 6:25. Thou art still a servant of the unrighteous mammon, and therefore thou canst not serve God. Matt. 6:24. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for thee in thy present state to enter into the kingdom of God. Matt. 19:24. Luke 18:25.

3. Examine thyself, when, seated at table, thou partakest thy meal, whether thou feelest thankfulness arise in thy heart towards God for this temporal food, which he hath bestowed upon thee as necessary to thy sustenance; and whether thou hast a real desire that he may not only supply thy body, but also satisfy thy soul with good things, that it may delight itself in fatness, (Isaiah 55:2,) and, when thou hast finished thy meal, whether thou considerest that thou livest not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, (Matt. 4:4,) and strivest to receive the word of God, that it may be engrafted in thee to the saving

of thy soul. James 1 : 21. If thou proceedest not upon this plan, but enjoyest thy meal without reflection, having thy heart fixed upon earthly things, thou doest nothing more than the heathen, thou bearest the name of christian unjustly and in vain, nay, thou hungerest not after righteousness.

4. Examine thyself when thou hast finished thy daily business, and see whether thy heart is not filled with the world and all kinds of cares and thoughts about how or what thou shalt perform the next day, though thou art not certain of living till morning; or whether thou layest all temporal concerns at the feet of God, and enterest into meditation with thyself and considerest whether thou hast finished a day's work in the spirit, that thy soul and mind may have acquired something for which thou canst praise God and render unto him an acceptable sacrifice. But if thou actest not in this manner, if thou hast no care but that of gaining a livelihood, the day will come upon thee as a snare, and thou shalt not escape. Luke 21 : 34, 35.

5. Examine whether thou seekest honor from men, and feelest distressed when they treat thee with scorn; whether thou art yet irascible and revengeful; whether thou dost not desire to render evil for evil, and railing for railing; whether there do not proceed out of thy mouth both blessing and cursing (1 Pet. 3 : 9. James 3 : 10); whether thou dost

not rejoice when thou hast it in thy power to injure thy enemy or adversary, and whether thou art not greatly pleased with thyself when thou decoratest thyself in a splendid manner, in order to conform with the fashions of the world. Or art thou dead unto the world, seeking naught but the honor that cometh from God? Canst thou rejoice when men revile and persecute thee, and say, though falsely, all manner of evil of thee? Matt. 5: 11, 12. Is thy irascible and envious nature become changed into a mild, affectionate and sober demeanor, so that when a person curses thee, thou canst bless him in thy heart, knowing that thou art hereunto called, that thou mayest inherit the blessing? Canst thou refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile? 1 Pet. 3: 9, 10. Canst thou cheerfully pray for thy enemies, and, when in necessity, render them assistance? Hast thou acquired, in humility of spirit, a just abhorrence of thyself? Hast thou turned thy back upon the friendship of the world? And are they become thy friends who do the will of God? Mark 3: 34, 35. If these things be in thee and abound, thou art made a partaker of the promised blessing; for blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. Luke 11: 28. But if thou lackest these things, thou hast no part in this salvation, neither art thou a real christian; for to boast of the name of

christian, when our walk declares unto the world the contrary, is a mockery of Christ; for he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2: 6.

6. Examine whether thou canst still spend thy time in idle company, in jesting, in folly and all kinds of wantonness; whether thou canst still act the hypocrite, like all the false prophets, that men may speak well of thee. Luke 6: 26. Or art thou the true salt of the earth? Dost thou confess Christ before an adulterous and sinful generation? Mark 8: 38. Art thou clothed with the word of truth in the power of God, by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left? 2 Cor. 6: 7. Art thou a light to the world, and a city built on a hill, that thy good works may appear unto all men? Dost thou add to thy faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity? For if these things be in thee and abound, they make thee that thou shalt be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; but if thou lackest these things, thou art blind and canst not see afar off, and (although thou wast once purified) thou hast forgotten that thou wast purged from thy old sins. 2 Pet. 1:

III.

Now, my dear reader, pause here a while; seriously reflect upon and attentively consider thy condition; let God and thy conscience pass sentence, and observe closely whether the word of God and thy conscience agree in their verdict; suffer not thy conscience to speak before the word of God; but the word of God must speak first and bring in the indictment at the bar, thy conscience meanwhile standing up and bearing witness. Now the word of God is propounded unto thee; give it room to speak in thy heart; let it pierce as a sharp two-edged sword, transfixing the heart, dividing asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and the marrow, discerning the thoughts and intents of the mind, and manifesting all things unto thee. Heb. 4: 12, 13. For it concerns thy salvation and condemnation, heaven or hell, death or life, curse or blessing, one of which will be thy portion. Therefore, let thy conscience also speak. What is its reply? Does it speak salvation to thy soul, or not? Ponder well; pass not lightly over it, as though it was a mere fable, for it is the word of God acting upon thy heart; it is to thee either a savor of death unto death, or a savor of life unto life. 2 Cor. 2: 16. Wherefore, oh my reader, endeavor to be in earnest; give diligence to make thy calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1: 10); run,

not as uncertainly; fight, not as one that beateth the air. 1 Cor. 9: 26. Wherefore ask thy conscience again, whether thou ever wast poor in spirit, ever experiencedst sorrow of soul; whether thou art truly meek and feelest spiritual hunger; whether thou art merciful and charitable; whether thou hast obtained purity of heart in which thou mayest see God; whether thou hast obtained peace with God; which peace controls thy mind in contrariety or preference to reason; and whether for the righteousness of God and his truth's sake thou art contemned, reviled and persecuted, and according to the words of Christ, hated for his name's sake. Matt. 10: 22. Mark 13: 13.

Now, what reply does thy conscience make? Does it answer no, thou hast not attained these things; thou art not yet purged by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living God. Heb. 9: 14.

Therefore, oh beloved reader, if thy conscience bears witness of this kind against thee, be not foolish, but take counsel and work out thy salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2: 12. For if thou art capable of reflection, is it possible for thee to lie down and enjoy undisturbed repose, when there is nothing to assure thee that thou mayest not waken up in death, or on the very verge of hell? Then, having thy conscience convinced oughtest thou to trifle away this great salva-

tion, which can be purchased without money and without price? Or wilt thou, like the foolish virgins, supplied with light but destitute of grace, run headlong into everlasting destruction? O what a gnawing worm will harass and torment thee forever! and in what gloomy colors will not thy mad folly be portrayed before thy unwilling eyes! No man of common sense starts upon a journey without knowing, or at least thinking where he is going to, and he prepares himself accordingly; yet thou, who art travelling towards a long and endless eternity, makest no preparations; sleepest secure in sin, and livest in the desperate indulgence of a false confidence. Does not the merchant supply his ship with a compass, and procure a captain capable of conducting it in safety to the place of destination? And wilt thou, unaided by the compass of the word, and destitute of the directing influence of the Holy Spirit, hazard thy soul's frail bark upon the boisterous sea of temptation, not knowing what instant it may be dashed into a thousand pieces, as it plunges with horrid bound and terrific impetuosity into the dark and gloomy gulf of everlasting perdition!

Is there any person so foolish as not to be willing to be set right when he is going a wrong road? Yet thou, who art convinced that thy way is not good, art so foolish and stiffnecked, that thou wilt not receive counsel,

but persistest still in thy perverse course
Jeremiah 8.

The irrational creatures in the time of Noah, being afraid of the approaching flood, went into the ark in obedience to the commandment of God; yet thou, after that God has called thee and declared unto thee in his word, that an everlasting doom will come upon all those that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Thes. 1: 8,) hardenest thy heart continually, and triflest away thy time in this evil and sinful world, with lands and oxen, and the like, which thou supposest will serve thee for an excuse, (Luke 14,) and darest not the fearful unending fire and burning hell which threaten thee with impending destruction, till at length the door is shut, and thou art compelled to go with the ungodly into torment, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Mark 9. If a criminal in prison is convinced, that by human judgment he will be sentenced to death, will he rejoice in his confinement? Yet thou, who art imprisoned in sins and bound with the ponderous chains of darkness; who art convinced, that if thou wast brought before the bar of God, thou wouldst be sentenced to everlasting death, canst, nevertheless, in despite of all thy convictions, amuse thyself with the world, spend thy time in idleness and sensuality; and, moreover, repose in the greatest security, although thou knowest not

what hour thy Lord cometh, when thou shalt hear the dreadful sentence: Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed, and bring all thy works, which thou hast done in thy life, before my judgment, and yet thou hast not put my money to the exchangers: wherefore that which thou hast shall be taken from thee, and thou shalt be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 25. O thoughtless man! take heed while it is called to-day. For a criminal, upon finding that sentence of death is passed upon him, petitions the chief magistrate for a pardon. But thou knowest that Jesus Christ is constituted by the Father chief magistrate, invested with the power of pardoning all such sinners as are condemned by his righteousness, and rendering them happy, provided they submit to these conditions, namely, that they humble their rebellious hearts (1 Pet. 5: 5, 6. James 6: 10,) and lay aside their carnal weapons which they have used so long against him, and subject themselves to him, and follow him in whatsoever he commandeth them. Matt. 19: 28, 29. But this will be a hard lesson for thee, and, therefore, thou rejectest continually all the precious proffers of so high and compassionate a mediator as Jesus; and this greatly enhances the severity of thy sentence and condemnation.

Now, beloved man, art thou dead, or mad, that this consideration should not stir thee up in giving diligence to make thy calling and election sure, (2 Pet. 1 : 10,) and so to run as not uncertainly, not to beat the air, (1 Cor. 9 : 26,) or grope for the wall like the blind, and grope as if thou hadst no eyes, and stumble at noonday in the blaze of gospel light, as in the night, and dwell in desolate places as the dead, so that thou lookest for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from thee. Isaiah 59 : 10, 11.

Oh, is this not too much the case with thee ! Awake then, in earnest, from thy sleep, and arise from thy dead works, that Christ may give thee light. Eph. 5 : 14. Receive him as thy wisdom, (1 Cor. 1 : 30,) and like a faithful disciple (Matt. 11 : 29,) learn of him the beginning of a christian life, which is repentance and conversion ; and entreat him for a thorough purification of heart and the renovating power of his Holy Spirit ; saying with David : How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily ; how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me ? Consider and hear me, O Lord my God ; lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death ; lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him. Ps. 13.

IV.

Cease not also, with prayers and tears, to read the holy scriptures, and particularly the New Testament, wherein God has manifested in his son and by the mouth of his apostles, his holy evangelical will and counsel: and learn from its pages how Christ himself walked in the world, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. 1 Pet. 2: 21.

He who was rich, for your sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. 2 Cor. 8: 9.

He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. 5: 21.

He who was the Lord, became despised and rejected of men. Isaiah 53.

He who is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, became a servant for us all, and was charged with being Beelzebub, or the prince of the devils. Matt. 10: 25, and 12-24, and 20: 28.

He, who was the wisdom of the Father and the brightness of his glory, which the angels desire to look into, was charged with being a devil and a deceiver of the people.—John 10: 20. Heb. 1: Col. 1, 13.

He, who was worthy of all honor, sought no honor but that of his Father. John 5: 41. chap. 7: 17, 18. He, who is worthy to be glorified by all men, hears almost all men

cry out, Crucify him! Crucify him! He, who gives to all thirsty souls the genuine water of life, (John 7: 37) had nothing in the time of his great suffering and thirst but vinegar mixed with gall. Matt. 27: 34. Ps. 69: 22. He, who gives eternal life unto all faithful and enquiring souls, was taken by men and hanged upon a tree. Acts 5: 30. Now, they have done this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry? If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Matt. 10: 25.

Therefore, my dear reader, view thyself in the above mirror; examine thy heart well, and see whether thou art willing to suffer with Christ, to bear the shame with equanimity, expecting to overcome through faith in his name: if so, endure chastening, for he chasteneth every son whom he receiveth; but if thou be without chastisement, thou art a bastard and no son. Heb. 12. For as soon as thou abandonest thy own will, and beginnest to follow thy master, Christ Jesus, desirous to learn of him, and to obtain from him thy salvation, satan will not be remiss in employing his wiles against thee, making use of every means in his power to retain thee in darkness. Art thou young? then he will represent thy youth to thee, insinuating that thou canst not at this time live in this manner; for how is it possible for thee to forsake

thy fine company, thy friends and relations, who would all look upon thee in this world as a fool and simpleton; therefore, delay a little while, God will not abandon thee on this account, for he is merciful and will have patience with thy youth. Thou hast, perhaps, received the ordinance of baptism; if so, he attempts to preach to thee faith in Christ, telling thee thou shalt not be so discouraged, for thou art baptised, goest to the Lord's table, and bearest the livery of Christ; wherefore be not so dejected, thou shalt be saved by grace, and not by works. Yea, by many more such insidious suggestions he strives, if possible, to lull thee again to sleep; but, O man, resist the devil, and he will flee from thee; draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to thee; for it is said further, Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded; be afflicted, and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness; humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4. Ah, beloved man, let satan speak and oppose as he may, turn not thou from God; call upon Jesus, and consider him as thy only helper in time and in eternity. Although to the flesh his cross may appear heavy, yet to the soul it is easy and pleasant; therefore bear all things patiently, and come after Christ, and thou shalt be his disciple, (Luke

14: 27,) and he will quicken thee, so that thou shalt be able to say from experience, O how easy is thy yoke, and how light is thy burden! Matt. 11: 30.

Therefore, my beloved fellow-man, if thou art desirous of becoming a man of God, I say with Paul, Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called (1 Tim. 6: 11, 12); look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. 12: 2.

Now, afflicted sinner, reflect that Jesus has done and suffered all this for thy sake; therefore be not afraid, set satan and the world at defiance, and take up the cross for his sake, and consider what it shall profit thee if thou shalt gain the whole world and lose thy own soul; or what thou shalt give in exchange for thy soul. Mark 8: 36, 37. Yea, consider: it is not thy friends and relations, thy parents, brothers or sisters that can render thee assistance in the hour of death; but it is Christ and his grace: he who commands thee to bear his cross, and testifies that the friendship of the world is enmity with God (James 4: 4,) and surely it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb. 10: 31.

Well then, sinner, if thou art willing to hazard it with Christ, and to go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, (Heb. 13: 13,) stop thy spiritual or internal ear against the world, and the world's conversation; for as soon as thou openest thy mind to thy friends and relations, who live according to the will of the flesh, and disclosest to them thy determination to surrender thyself wholly unto Christ and embrace his doctrine, satan will instigate them to tempt thee, in an extremely dangerous manner, and with fond words and endearing accents, to dissuade thee from thy design, and rob thee of thy resolution. If thou belongest to some society, and makest known to them the condition of thy soul, telling them thou must change thy manner of life, or be forever ruined, they will perhaps reply, Thy life has not been so bad as thou thinkest; others live no better, and yet hope to be saved; only have faith in Jesus, for we must be saved by grace, and not by merit; we are all weak creatures; we cannot live so strict as the scripture enjoins it upon us to do; just think, if it was as thou supposest, all thy forefathers and friends must have perished: wherefore discard these melancholy thoughts, or thou wilt become distracted and lose the use of thy reason. These and similar discourses are temptations of satan through the children of unbelief: but here be on thy

guard, and suffer nothing to induce thee to turn from Christ; keep fast hold of him and his doctrine, for upon this depends thy eternal salvation: turn thy mind away from their discourse, and, like the man who was born blind, confess the Lord Jesus as far as he has manifested himself to thee. If thou doest these things and sufferest not thyself to be seduced from Christ, but confessest him according to his word, in opposition to the scribes and pharisees, thou wilt in a short time be cast out by them, and be compelled to hear: Thou wast born in sins, and teachest thou us? But be not terrified at this, for Christ will visit thee and manifest himself unto thee. When satan and the world find that they cannot impede thy progress by means of flattery, they try other methods; for the world begins to mock and calumniate, and endeavors to render thee despondent; thy best friends often become thy greatest enemies, as Christ has told us beforehand, Think not that I am come to give peace on earth, nay, but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father: the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother: the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Luke

12: 51, 52, 53. This can easily be observed at the present day; for as soon as a man turns from dead works to serve the living God, forsakes his former life, begins in earnest to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and out of pity and christian compassion reproves his carnal friends in their dissolute course, they will not bear it; for he that is born after the flesh, persecutes him that is born after the spirit, (Gal. 4: 29,) for the flesh and the spirit are contrary the one to the other. Chap. 5: 17.

If a person, at length, obtains, through grace and the mercy of God, a pure heart, which enables him to see God; if he discovers the new and living way which entereth within the veil, and observes the sanctuary of God, wherein is the mercy seat, which is Christ overshadowed by the cherubim of the glory of God, where also is to be seen the high priest once offered up for our sins, whereby we have obtained eternal redemption, (Heb. 9: 12,) O, then such a person receives Christ, by true faith in his strength, for his head; his testament, sealed by his own blood, for his rule; the Holy Spirit for a safeguard and conductor; and thus prepared he marches onward in the narrow but pleasant way of life, not merely that he may see the kingdom of God, but that he may, in truth, arrive in it and take possession of it. John 3: 3, 5. Luke 17: 21. Not as though

e was apprehended by Christ, but that he asten, run, follow and apprehend him as he ath apprehended us. Phil. 3 : 12, 13. Here person forgets those things which are behind, and reaches forth toward the mark, for the heavenly prize ; here we can say with the holy apostle Peter, in the 4th ch. 3 and 4 verses, " For the time past of our life may suffice us, to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." But this the world thinks strange that we run not with them to the same excess of riot and abuse, specially when we forsake idolatry and corrupted sectarianism and testify against them with the word of God : then the divines and the self-righteous and formal christians begin to cry out and exclaim, as was done in former times to Christ, He is mad, he is an enthusiast, or is possessed with a devil, why do we hear him ? (John 10 : 20,) for he will only raise a tumult. Yea, they are afraid that their Diana will be destroyed : therefore they cry out, Great is Diana. Acts 19. In other words, they endeavor by wrong means to defend their idolatrous church and society, and get up an excitement against such persons, speaking all manner of evil against them, yet without the shadow of a foundation. But this reflection consoles such persons, that they have so done to the prophets

who were before them, nay, even to Christ himself and to his holy apostles; for through much tribulation must we enter into the kingdom of God. And as the Father hath allotted to Christ his kingdom under the cross, even so hath Christ allotted it unto us: for if we were of the world, the world would love its own; but because Christ hath chosen us out of the world, therefore the world hateth us (John 15: 19); because one cannot, like the false prophets, prophesy good concerning idolatrous christendom, saying, Go and prosper, for this reason are they wroth against us. 1 Kings 22. But all this must not retard our progress; we must keep our eye constantly on the footsteps of our forerunner, who hath taken possession of heaven, till all things be brought to pass which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets from the beginning of the world, (Acts 13: 21,) from whence he shall come the second time to judge the quick and the dead; and then every man shall be rewarded according to his works, whether they be good or whether they be evil. Matt. 16: 27. 2 Cor. 5: 10.

Wherefore let no faithful soldier become dejected, but let him run with patience the race that is set before him. Heb. 12. Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, having your loins

girt about with truth; and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Eph. 6.

Here thou hast the whole panoply of God, weapons well tried, which never fail in the hand capable of wielding them. Therefore, observe and learn from thy field officer, Christ Jesus, who will himself instruct thee; for he hath overcome and liveth, wherefore thou also shouldst and wilt overcome and live. John 14: 19. Rev. 3: 21. In the world thou shalt have tribulation: but be of good cheer, he hath overcome the world. John 16: 33. He hath given thee his word, therefore the world hateth thee, because thou art not of the world, even as he is not of the world; therefore he hath sanctified himself for thee, that thou mightest be sanctified through his truth. John 17. He will not leave thee comfortless, but will come unto thee. John 14: 18. He will comfort thee as a mother comforteth her child; and though a mother may forget her child, yet he will not forget thee; for he hath graven thee upon

the palms of his hands. Isaiah 49: 15, 16.

Therefore, fear not, for he hath redeemed thee; and when thou passest through the water (of temptation,) the rivers shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire (of tribulation,) thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Is. 43. For who is he that will harm thee, if thou be a follower of that which is good? But and if thou sufferest for righteousness sake, happy art thou; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in thy heart. 1 Pet. 3: 13, 14.

Oh, beloved pilgrim and fellow traveller to the regions of life! Should not the sweet and precious promises of God in Christ Jesus animate and encourage us to pursue our journey with assiduity, and to fight with alacrity the fight of faith? When the corrupt and anti-christian world is enraged at and calumniates us, pointing the finger of scorn and treating us with ignominy, let us ever reflect upon the words of Christ; Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Matt. 5: 11, 12.

Now, what do we desire more than that our reward should be great in heaven? Are

we then willing to seek our reward here on earth in the enjoyment of a dissolute, sumptuous and magnificent life?

O, should we not gladly leave this licentious, carnal, honorable and sensual life to those who shall be tormented in another world, (Luke 16,) and patiently submit ourselves to reproach, as knowing that our reward is great in heaven.

All those, who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, are there before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple : and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. 7.

Now, faithful soul, who livest under the cross, is not this sufficient to render the yoke of Christ easy and his burden light? Or art thou desirous of hearing more of the heavenly life of the triumphant soldiers of Christ, that thou mayest be encouraged and animated in thy journey? Well then, hear what the Spirit saith to the churches :

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Rev. 2: 7.

Fear not of these things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. Verses 10: 11.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Verse 17.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father; and I will give him the morning star. Verses 26, 27, 28.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. Chap. 3: 5.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name. Verse 12.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne. Verse 21.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Chap. 21: 6, 7.

O serious inquirer! Is not thy heart replete with rapture in the contemplation of these heavenly promises? Yes, thou repliest, if I could only be made partaker of them; but I am so insignificant, so poor and despicable, that I fear I may at last be rejected. I answer: Come as thou art; cast thyself down in thy humility at the feet of thy Saviour; bring neither money nor recompense, but surrender thyself unconditionally, that he may display his boundless mercy towards thee; hear now, all that is divine calleth upon thee; the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. Chap. 22: 17.

Now, faithful soul, contemplate all these heavenly promises, consider that God has tendered thee more than thou canst ask. What now is the language of thy heart? Art thou fully determined in thy humility to fol-

low Christ under the cross? Art thou now willing to take the doctrine and conduct of Christ for the rule of thy life? Art thou willing now, not only to reign with Christ, but also to suffer with him? Answerest thou with Peter, Lord, to whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life. John 6: 68. Well then, if such is thy mind, dismiss thy diffidence, discard thy manfearing spirit, and confess, by word and deed, the Lord Jesus in the midst of an adulterous and sinful generation; let thy speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt (Col. 4: 6); let thy works and conversation shine as a light to the world, that they may glorify thy Father who is in heaven, (Matt. 5: 16,) so shalt thou be led by the Spirit in the way of all truth, and receive of the fulness of Jesus grace for grace, (John 1: 16,) to enable thee to live a constant, victorious and triumphant life in God, in whom all the promises are to thee Yea and Amen, to the glory of God. 2 Cor. 1: 20. To him alone be the praise for ever and ever. Amen.

V.

Beloved reader, forasmuch as I have, in my plain manner, by the grace of God dispensed unto me, briefly illustrated the beginning of this sermon, and as it is absolutely necessary for us to be made partakers of the above cited blessings, in order to understand the remaining part, I will, by the help of God,

proceed in the consideration of the same, hoping that every reader may be benefitted by a perusal.

Christ speaketh in this manner: Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Verses 17: 18.

Now, he is not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Why so? Because none of Adam's posterity was able to fulfil the righteousness of the law; for in Adam we are all transgressors; so that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified (Rom. 3: 20. Gal. 3: 11); but we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Gal. 3: 23.

Now, Christ is not come to annul the law, that is, to abolish the original righteousness of the law; for by it is the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3: 20) but to fulfil it. In what way then did Christ fulfil the law? In the first place, no man was found able to keep the law or comply with its requisitions; for the law demanded a perfect righteousness. Therefore we were all by the law under the curse. But Christ, who knew no sin, and in whose mouth was found no guile, has, in the first place, in his whole walk, complied with the conditions of the law, which required a per-

fect holiness, and an irreproachable obedience, such as Christ alone was capable of rendering.

But, secondly, inasmuch as Christ took upon him the weakness inherited by us from Adam's transgression, and bore our sins, he had, in our stead and for our sins, to fall under the curse of the law, and be hanged upon a tree, so that he became a curse for us and redeemed us from the curse of the law; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Deut. 21: 23. In this manner he hath put away sin by offering up a perfect sacrifice (Heb. 9: 26); that as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification. Rom. 5: 18. For by the perfect sacrifice of this second Adam, the original righteousness which stood against the first Adam and his posterity, is fulfilled, so that God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness; that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Rom. 3.

Reader, mark this, that as Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was made sin for us, so hath he by sin condemned sin in the flesh, namely, original sin; not that he himself hath sinned, but that he hath taken

our sins upon him, (mark) that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Rom. 8.

For Christ was himself perfect God and perfect man. As touching his humanity, he was holy, righteous, without spot, and blameless; but for our sakes became he poor and weak, undergoing trials and temptations, that he might be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, and be a merciful and faithful high priest to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Heb. 2: 17, 18. Chap. 4: 15.

In his divine attributes he was invincible, though as a son of Adam or a sinner, (yet holy and blameless) he suffered the cursed death of the cross, whereby he was made a perfect sacrifice for sin. Yet it was impossible for death to confine him; he rose again, and triumphed over sin, death and the devil; for in that he suffered death, he hath by his obedience fulfilled the righteousness and satisfied the demands of the law; and, moreover, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. Heb. 2; 14, 15.

Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night (Rev. 12: 10); for as long

as the claims of the law remain unsatisfied, the requisitions of which none of Adam's posterity were able to fulfil, so long has satan power to accuse them before God. But now he is cast out; his power is destroyed; as Christ exclaimed when about to suffer and fight the great fight of victory, Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. John 12: 31. Chap. 16: 11.

In the third place, it is to be remarked that no man can any more bring in an accusation against Adam; because his sins which were transmitted to us, have been blotted out by the blood of Christ; for God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, (2 Cor. 5: 19,) namely, the sin of Adam, which he doth not impute unto us. Therefore Christ speaketh concerning the innocent children that live not in actual transgression, saying, Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God. Matt. 19: 14. Mark 10: 14.

But when a man lives in a state of actual sin, after he arrives to the years of discretion, loving darkness rather than the light, (John 3: 19,) and walking according to the will of the flesh; then it must not be said any more that Adam has done this, or satan has done it; but it must be said, Thou after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto

thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds. Rom. 2: 5, 6. For the debt of Adam is cancelled by the blood of Christ, and the power of the devil is destroyed, so that if he ever misleads us, it is because we place ourselves voluntarily within his grasp, and turn away from Christ, who hath overcome him, and having spoiled his principalities, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Col. 2: 15. But as many as receive him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God, which are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1. These are they, who, coming to a knowledge of their sins by the law, groan and weep under them, and sink down before the Lord in humility of spirit and godly sorrow, hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of Christ, till finally they obtain access unto this grace, and receive and embrace Christ through faith in his righteousness; and thus the righteousness of the law is fulfilled by the righteousness of Christ; as Paul expresses it, (Rom. 8: 3, 4.) We walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. Verse. 2.

But, now, not one jot or one tittle of the law shall pass away till all be fulfilled; for

Paul says, We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully, knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, (for they are dead to the law, and are married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Rom. 7: 4,) but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers, for man-slayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine. 1 Tim. 1: 8, 9, 10.

Mark this: If there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine. From this we may infer, that all who have not by faith attained the righteousness of Christ, are, as has been already frequently inculcated, under the law, and consequently under the curse. Hence, the righteousness of the law remains in full force against all that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thess. 1: 8, 9.

That which the ceremonial law attempts to accomplish by much shedding of blood and many outward sacrifices, hath Christ, as the true high priest, in one sacrifice, fulfilled for ever, that we might by him offer up

spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. 1 Pet. 2: 5. Yea, the written law, with its many types and shadows, which pointed unto Christ, was consummated in him: for he was the body itself. Col. 2: 16, 17. Yea, the law had the shadow of good things to come, and not the very substance of the things, as is shown in the whole epistle to the Hebrews, and likewise in those to the Romans and Galatians, nay, in the whole new testament.

Therefore, in this sermon Christ has changed the law into a perfect dispensation, which it is our intention, by the help of God, further to consider, in order that we may arrive at the correct spiritual understanding of his gracious discourse. And may Almighty God pour out his grace and blessing, and write it by his Holy Spirit in our hearts, that we may not only read and consider, but also embrace and comply with it, by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory dominion and unceasing praise, for ever and ever. Amen. Yea, Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

My beloved reader, I must again charge thee, if thou hast read these pages, pause for a while, and consider well what road thou art in; examine and see whether thou art not walking in the broad way of the flesh; whether thou art not as yet attached to the world, or whether the world is crucified unto thee, and thou unto the world; whether thou livest after the flesh or after the Spirit; whether thou

dost not, like the pharisees, possess nothing but an external show of righteousness; or hast thou attained the righteousness that is revealed from faith to faith? Rom. 1: 17.

Behold, reader, if thou still livest in the first Adam, in the old creature, and not in the second Adam, in the new creature, thou bringest forth fruit unto death. Therefore we must be transplanted from the first into the second Adam, Christ Jesus, before we can bring forth fruit unto God. Rom. 7: 4, 5. Ah, my dear reader, do not disregard the day of grace; lift up thy soul to him who is both able and willing to help thee, and with a devout heart pray unto him and say, O Jesus, thou who hast loved me and the whole human family with an unspeakable love, thou hast vouchsafed to come unto thy own, to thy fallen creatures, to ransom them from eternal death, and thy own received thee not; but as many as received thee, to them hast thou given power to become the sons of God. O Jesus, I am one of the former, who have not received thee as I ought; thou calledst me, but I would not answer; thou hast in part manifested thy light unto me, but I have loved darkness rather than the light; thou hast knocked, but I would not open; thou hast exonerated me from the debt incurred by Adam's transgression, but I have myself contracted debts, yea exceedingly enormous debts, which I shall never be able to pay.

I now acknowledge my folly; my sins press heavily upon me; they overwhelm me; as an oppressive burden they are too grievous to be borne: I thought at first I would recompense thee with service and satisfy thee with worship; but I now see that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature, or the faith that worketh by love. O poor sinner that I am! I find I am destitute of all things; I have consumed thy substance which was divided unto me. I have nothing in which my soul taketh delight. I am poor and miserable; I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; therefore I beseech thee with Manasseh, Pardon my sins, O Lord! pardon me and let me find grace in thy sight. Hasten, O Jesus, and carry on thy work within me: save me, not for the sake of my own righteousness, which is but an unclean and filthy rag, but for thy great mercy through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus! with a broken spirit and a contrite heart I prostrate myself before thee. I am sensible of thy clemency, patience and long suffering towards me. I find I can enjoy no consolation but in thee; I discover salvation in no other name but thine; therefore my soul hungereth and thirsteth after thee. O fill me with good things, that my soul may revel in spiritual

enjoyments; permit me to taste thy mercy; O grant me a pure heart, that I may see God and discern and realize how gracious thou art; that I may be able with thee to bear thy cross with all patience and meekness. Instruct me in the way of thy knowledge, and write thy law in my heart, and let it sink deep in my mind, that I may walk uprightly before thee all the days of my life. This I ask of thee, O Jesus! be merciful unto me for thy promise sake; be merciful, O my Jesus! be merciful unto me for thy great name's sake, and let me know thy will, Amen. Amen, O Jesus, Amen.

Beloved reader, humble thyself in this manner, and Jesus will exalt thee; come unto him thus, and he will in no wise cast thee out.

O poorness of spirit, despised condition,
 O lowly humility, glorious place,
 Divested of all and entirely denuded,
 That thou may'st have access to heavenly grace,
 O happy beginning of pure christian day,
 By anguish of mind thou exaltest thy soul
 To Jesus, and findest in meekness the way,
 By which thou again this wide earth canst control,
 And thus thou true righteousness thirstest to find
 With longing and weeping and sorrow of mind.
 O dear happy soul, do not afflicted repine,
 For here on this earth thou canst find nothing higher,
 But seek thou thy food in eternity's clime,
 Thy heart to supply in its every desire.
 Thy neighbors and friends thou desirest now to go,
 And buy such delicious and sumptuous food;
 Thou prayest and longest, yea e'en for thy foe,
 That he may soon travel the heavenly road.
 Compassion of spirit! O happy condition!

Wherein thou a pure heart obtainest from God,
To see through thy Jesus, by Heaven's agnition,
Sweet comfort and peace in thy soul shed abroad.
O glorious peace! O favor of Heaven!
Art higher than all the great counsels of man,
Thou art the consoler, through grace thou dost even
Give sweetness to crosses and render them bland.
Thou dost us assist amidst dark times to guard,
Thou mak'st us in sorrow that joyful we be.
O happy the patient, thou shalt them reward,
And set them from sorrow eternally free.
Now haste, sons of men, O haste and arise,
O sinners, O mortals, from sin now awake,
Commence ye the journey that leads to the skies,
Your sins and your habits resolved to forsake.
O hearken and hear ye the peace-trumpet's sound,
Intended to give you to Canaan a start.
Peruse holy writ with devotion profound,
Observe whether Jesus dont knock at your heart.
As poor, at his feet all things earthly cast down,
Lay hold e'en to-day of the heavenly crown.
Oh happy this life, when our Jesus is near,
He cancels our sins and sets the soul free,
He renders mild, righteousness strict and severe,
The person who feels this, O happy is he.
O love without bounds, without end or control,
I thank thee, my God, from the depth of my soul,
Because thou hast cloth'd us with love from on high;
No devil shall harm us, for Jesus is nigh.

Amen.

CHAPTER SECOND.

Embraces a portion from the 20th to the 26th verse. 1. Of the righteousness of the pharisees. 2. Of the righteousness which exceeds that of the pharisees. 3. Of the manner in which a person should conduct himself towards his brethren or fellow men. 4. Of the prison of hell. 5. A well-grounded exhortation to all men.

I.

Christ Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer, has shown us the way which leads to his Gospel through the eight different blessings, and his doctrine was quite a different one from that of the scribes and pharisees; for the scribes preached up the law, and sought righteousness as it were by the works of the law. Rom. 9: 31, 32. But Christ rejected in his doctrine all the righteousness and meritoriousness of the law, as was shown in the first chapter in treating of the eight blessings.

Nevertheless, he declared to the people, that he was not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it; for he has brought to light a complete spiritual dispensation which lay concealed under the shadow of the law; this new dispensation, which lay concealed in the law, the pharisees did not perceive nor observe; they looked entirely to the works of the law, and consequently did not attain to the law of righteousness. Rom. 9: 31.

For we know, says Paul, that the law is spiritual, (Rom. 7: 14,) and being spiritual it must be understood in a spiritual manner; that is to say, all the ordinances of the ceremonial law were but types of Christ, and the accomplishment; for in him they are all fulfilled; he was the body itself, he hath abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain (namely the Jews and Gentiles) one new man, so making peace, (Eph. 2); yea he hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross, (Col. 2); for he hath brought in a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God. Heb. 7: 19. Notwithstanding, the righteousness of the law is not destroyed, but fulfilled in them that are partakers with Christ; and all the types and shadows of the law are perpetual evidence of Christ, always pointing unto him; as Christ himself declares, saying, Search the scriptures, (namely the law and the prophets, for the gospel was not yet written); for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. John 5: 39, 40.

This was the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, that they thought they had eternal life in the works of the law, which, notwithstanding, only bore testimony of Christ

Therefore he declared to the people, (who no doubt looked upon the scribes and pharisees as being the particular favorites of God, for they kept the outside clean, fasted oft, made long prayers, were acquainted with the law, (Matt. 23. Rom. 2): appeared righteous before men and gave tithes. Luke 18. I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 5: 20.

From this I would have thee to learn, that with all thy morality, formal prayers, almsgiving, apparent piety, and with all thy carnal faith, outward confession and worship of God, thou shalt be finally lost, unless thou shalt have something to exceed all this.

II.

Thou must first become poor in spirit and filled with godly sorrow; thou must become meek, must hunger and thirst in thy soul after the righteousness of Christ, which alone is accepted of God; thou must become merciful and compassionate towards thy friends and thy enemies; thou must, through the blood of Christ, obtain a pure heart in which thou mayest see God, and perceive that God is reconciled unto thee through the death of his son, by whom we have access by faith into this grace. Rom. 5: 2.

Therefore Paul says, Where is boasting

then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Rom. 3: 27. Here then is an end to boasting; here a person liveth no longer himself, but Christ by his righteousness liveth in him (Gal. 2: 20): therefore he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, (2 Cor. 10: 17. 1 Cor. 1: 31,) and live by faith; for he hath attained, in the gospel, the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith. Rom. 1: 17. Habak. 2: 4.

This faith, nevertheless, cannot exist without works; for without them it is dead; as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also; (James 2: 26,) but with this difference: we must do the works not of ourselves, but by faith, that the honor may not be unto us, but unto God; for to this effect is the saying of Paul, We are his workmanship created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph. 2: 10.

Now, that we are created by grace as a work of God, we can not discontinue the same; for faith is constantly bringing forth its fruits in us; as a productive tree cannot conceal its fruit, neither can faith, which is constantly bringing forth its fruits in us, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, chastity, truth, righteousness, humility, godliness, modesty

and temperance. Gal. 5: 22. Eph. 3: 12. 2 Pet. 1: 5, 6, 7.

Faith always looks unto Christ, and receives of his fullness grace for grace (John 1: 16); and all these works, which true faith works in us by love, a person does not ascribe to himself, but to God, who worketh all things in him by the spirit of Christ; thus a man offers again by faith all things unto God. As all the water comes from the sea and flows back thither again, (Eccl. 40: 11. Prov. 1: 7,) so all the virtue and fruits of the Spirit proceed from God to our souls, and flow thither again through the spirit of faith, constituting a complete spiritual engine, kept always in motion by faith through love, as living members of the body of Christ, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Therefore they are not strong in themselves; that is, of themselves they can do nothing, but they can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth them. Phil. 4: 13. And being members of their Head, Christ Jesus, they are obedient and submissive, and follow their Head, who preserves them alive by the influx of his heavenly love, and gives them power to become the children of God (John 1); and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. 8: 17.

This, then, is the true righteousness of Christ; this is the real wedding garment, which a man puts on after he has in humil-

ity of spirit put off the old garment, and laid aside his own righteousness. This is, as it is called, to put on Christ, (Rom. 12): and be rooted and built up in him (Col. 2: 7): this is the kingdom of God within us, (Luke 17: 21,) and the righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees.

O Jesus, the true righteousness,
Which, ours destroyed, doth us possess,
The Lord doth for our souls provide,
What by the law was ne'er supplied.
Whereby we are with God made one,
Receiving the triumphal crown,
Both death and hell to overcome,
O blessed God, through thy dear son!
But this no pharisees possess,
Because they do not seek thy grace,
And hence they will as outcasts be,
In satan's power eternally.

From this thou canst conclude that it behooves thee to remain, as a sucking child, at the breast of Jesus and his righteousness, and learn of him, following his pattern and example, and confessing that without him thou canst not do any thing; that thou mayest abide in humility; for what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? 1 Cor. 4: 7.

Now, my beloved fellow man, examine thyself by the above criterion, and see whether thou hast become such a disciple of Jesus: whether thou hast assumed the nature of Christ, attained his righteousness by faith, and, as a productive tree, bringest forth the

fruits of godliness, that henceforth thou mayest not live unto thyself, but unto him who died for thee and rose again. 2 Cor. 5: 15. If thou hast attained these things, the exactions of Christ in his sermon, or in his whole gospel, will not be oppressive; for thy heart and will are in his possession, so that thou canst with him undergo all kinds of sufferings, and through faith in him, always come forth conqueror, as St. Paul says, In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Rom. 8: 37.

If thou hast not attained to this; if thou remainest yet in thy nature, not subject to Christ Jesus, thou wilt perhaps be astonished and say, Who then can be saved? Why so? Because thou knowest not the power of God, neither considerest that what is impossible with thee, is possible with God. Mark 10: 24, 26.

III.

Now Christ proceeds, saying, Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, (as the perfect lawgiver) that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Verses 21, 22.

Now, my dear reader, ask thy own conscience how oft thou hast been angry with thy brother professor, and hast borne in thy heart bitter hatred against him, altho' thou art in danger of the judgment; and not only this, but thou hast out of a malicious heart called him Raca, and frequently wished him all manner of evil, though thou wast in danger of the council: and all this was not enough, but thou hast, out of a malignant heart, not only called him a fool, but hast cursed and sworn at him, and wished his soul at the devil; these, and similar aspirations, thou hast been guilty of, though Christ declares that thou art in danger of hell fire; not to mention that together with all this, thou livest days and years with him in strife and litigation, nay, thou marchest forth against him with deadly weapons, and takest away his life, when thou oughtest to know, that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him (1 John 3: 15); and whosoever hateth his brother, (though he hath not killed him) is a murderer. And in this ungodly condition thou presumest that thou art a christian, and bringest thy prayer or gift to the altar of Christ, though he commanded thee that if thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, to leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way (wait not till he cometh, but

go thy way) and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Verses 23, 24.

Therefore Paul says, Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12: 14. But thou, having thy heart unsanctified and thy spirit towards thy brother unreconciled, regardest this not; for thy mind is too proud and arrogant to permit thee to humble thyself before thy brother, and solicit him for peace and obtain reconciliation with him, though thou shouldst not let the sun go down on thy wrath, (Eph. 4: 26,) for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. James 1: 20. Therefore James says in the 3d chapter, If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Yea, it is the part of a christian, if possible, to live peaceably with all men: he doth not desire to avenge himself, but leaveth vengeance unto the Lord; he overcometh evil

with good (Rom. 12); he is forbearing and compassionate towards his irreconciled brethren, according to the directions and example of Christ.

For it reads further, Agree with thine adversary quickly, (and wait not long) whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time (namely at the day of judgment) the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison; verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. Verses 25, 26.

In the first place it is to be observed, that the righteousness of God, discovered in the law, is our adversary as long as we live in actual transgression and do not humble ourselves under the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; for God resisteth the proud, 1 Pet. 5: 5. Whosoever is a friend of the world, is the enemy of God (James 4: 4): God is his adversary, his righteousness passes sentence of condemnation upon him; therefore it be-
hooves us quickly to be reconciled with this righteousness, and comply with its terms while we are yet in the way with it; that is, to humble ourselves in the day of grace, and be reconciled to God through Christ Jesus, (2 Cor. 5: 20,) lest at any time on the day of judgment this irreconciled righteousness deliver us to the judge, Christ Jesus, who will come to judge the world in righteousness.

(Acts 17: 31,) and the judge deliver us to the officer, namely the angels of his power, (2 Thess. 1: 7,) who will cast us into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 18: 41, 42. Chap. 25: 30.

In the second place if we have obtained this reconciliation with God, and, together with this, have been forgiven the ten thousand pounds which we owed to righteousness, and will not afterwards remit to our fellow servant his debts, and forgive him, as God through Christ has forgiven us, but take him by the neck and evilly treat him; then righteousness will take hold of us again, and cast us with all our debts into the prison of hell, from whence we shall by no means come out till we have paid the uttermost farthing. Matt. 18.

IV.

But some will object here, and say, that when the last farthing is paid, a person shall be released from hell.

I answer, first, that Christ speaks in this place by way of parable, in which a man is represented as owing an earthly king ten thousand pounds, and not having wherewith to pay, the king commands his servants to cast him into prison, with the denunciation that he shall not come out till he has paid the uttermost farthing. Now let every one judge for himself whether this debtor, who is worth

nothing, will ever be able to pay his debts by being in prison. I think he never will, because there is, as everybody knows, no service rendered by imprisonment. In like manner, if, in consequence of our not having obtained, in the day of grace, this reconciliation with God, we are cast into hell, we will there render no service with which to pay our debts.

On the other hand, even if a prisoner could at length pay his debt, and be released by his lord: would he thank him for it? I think not. For what must be paid first before a release is obtained, is not grace but service. So also if a man could at length pay God the last farthing in the torment of hell, and God would release him therefrom: would this be grace? No, it would be service, and inasmuch as it is service, such person could not praise God for his mercy, since he was not released by mercy but by merit.

Therefore Christ declares to us in this parable that we should be reconciled to God in the day of grace, for through him we have all access by one spirit unto the Father. Eph. 3: 18.

In the second place Christ says of the slothful servant who had not put his money to the exchangers, Take the talent from him, and give it to him who hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that

which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 25. Mark 4: 25.

Now it is to be observed, in the first place, that man is, by the fall of Adam, impregnated with the seed of sin or the devil, and this seed, having begun by lust to bring forth sin and its fruit, so that sin is fulfilled, brings forth death. James 1: 15. For he that committeth sin, is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3: 8. That is, Christ came into the world to deliver men from the power of sathan, to take away the prey from the mighty, (Is. 49: 24. Matt. 12: 29,) to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in the darkness out of the prison house. Is. 42: 7. Matt. 4: 16. For he hath, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage, (Heb. 2: 14, 15,) and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them, openly, triumphing over them in it, (Col. 2: 15,) so that Christ has placed us again on fair footing, having by his gospel invited us all, namely Jews and gentiles, nay all Adam's posterity, to his great supper (Luke 14); so

that Adam's transgression cannot condemn us, nor the power of satan retard us, if we follow the light of Christ, which, beaming forth in his gracious gospel, irradiates and vivifies our souls.

For he is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, (John 1,) for he delivers or tenders to the most ordinary individual one talent at least, which it is incumbent upon him to put to usury. Now if he puts this talent to usury, he will gain other talents, and will enter into the joy of his Lord; for he that is faithful over a few things, shall be made ruler over many things.

If, on the other hand, he does not put this accepted grace to usury, but buries it in an earthly heart, and lives after the will of the flesh or the devil, till his death, or till his Lord cometh, this grace or spiritual seed will be taken away entirely from his soul; nothing divine will be permitted to remain; and the soul will in consequence, as a dumb spirit of darkness, be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25: 30, 41.

Now, if the soul has not obtained a spiritual birth from God, she is a birth of the devil, nay an angel of the devil; for whosoever committeth sin is of the devil, and is a child of the devil. 1 John 3: 8, 10. John 8: 44.

Now the question is, If the soul is entirely

deprived of divine seed, and is, as an angel of satan, cast out into everlasting darkness, how can a divine birth, independent of divine seed, be brought forth by an angel of satan, nay of everlasting darkness? If a woman cannot bear unless she first conceives, how can a soul that is deprived beforehand of every divine principle, bring forth a divine essence? Thou mayest perhaps reply that God is able again to impregnate her. This is true, if it was not at variance with his righteous plan; but we do not find that Christ promised the slothful servant, that after he had undergone a long torment in hell he would restore the talent which had been taken from him, but he three times reiterates, Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Mark 9: 44, 46, 48. Paul says, It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment. Heb. 9: 27. Therefore after death and judgment it will be in vain for a person to call for comfort or for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue; for the great gulf or stern righteousness is immoveably fixed between heaven and hell, between the happy and the miserable. Luke 16.

O wretched man! who accepteth not this grace that bringeth salvation, which hath appeared unto thee, (Tit. 2: 11,) and hardenest thy heart against the voice of the Lord, (Heb. 3: 7, 8,) and neglectest to enter into this rest,

of which a promise is made unto us, (chap 4: 1,) though God has declared in numerous passages of scripture that thou shalt be tormented with fire and brimstone, day and night, for ever and ever; yea, it shall be thy everlasting inheritance, and thou shalt dwell there for ever and ever. Is. 34. Rev. 14: 10, 11.

But thou startest this objection, Eternity will not endure through all ages, but will finally come to an end; for the Lord said unto Moses concerning the servant who would not go out free from his master, His master shall bring him to the door or unto the door-post, and shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. Ex. 26: 6. Now when this servant dies, the forever or eternity is at an end.

I answer, it is a fact that as soon as the servant died, the eternity to him was at an end; but had he never died, had his life never come to an end, then the eternity of his bondage had never drawn to an end.

In the same manner, the soul that will not go out free from the servitude of satan in this jubilee of grace, (for this is the acceptable year of the Lord, in which the captives are to be delivered, and the bruised set free, (Is. 61: 1. Luke 4: 18, 19,) but loves the master of darkness, and suffers her ear to be bored through at the door-post of hell, (even in this year of jubilee when she might go out free)

shall remain his servant forever. Mark, the soul is willing to devote her ear, that is, her hearing, entirely to the voice of satan, and cleave to him, despising the deliverance of the jubilee.

Now, as the servant who would not be set free in the year of jubilee, had to remain a servant forever, that is, as long as he lived, and had no opportunity or promise of ever again going out free, but had to be in bondage to his master as long as he lived: so the soul which will not be set at liberty in the jubilee of grace, will be compelled to remain a servant or an angel of the devil forever, that is, during the whole period of its existence.

Now, if it can be evinced that the soul, after a long eternity, shall arrive at an end in its existence and be annihilated, then it can be demonstrated that the eternity of its duration shall draw to a close. But if it is an established fact that the soul is immortal, then it remains that the eternity of its existence has no end.

Thou mayest perhaps reply, The soul must be refined in the fire of hell till every devilish principle is consumed and purified, and then the eternity of its damnation will be consummated.

I answer, how can any thing that is impure or filthy in itself, serve to make clean? How shall the impure fire of hell cleanse the

soul from its hellish principles, seeing the impure fire of darkness here in this season of grace, inflames the whole course of nature, if only that small member, the tongue, is set on fire of hell. James 3: 6. If this impure fire accends the whole course of nature here in the season of grace, where the spirit of God strives with us, and the fire of the love of Jesus, together with his merit, is tendered us for purification, what power then shall this tenebrious fire have to purify the soul in hell after it is forsaken by the Holy Spirit, and left destitute of the grace of God?

Oh reader! this is the season of grace, this is the day of salvation and the acceptable year of the Lord (2 Cor. 6: 2. Luke 4: 19); now an open door is set before thee, and no man can shut it (Rev. 3: 8); therefore enter in, and seek not to climb up some other way (John 10); now thirst after righteousness, and come, and it shall be administered unto thee. John 7: 37.

Now, the justification of life is come upon all men, that they be not, for Adam's offence, made subjects of condemnation. Rom. 5. But take heed, lest after thy hardness and impenitent heart thou freely subjectest thyself to condemnation. Rom. 2: 5. Now is the true time of restoration; see therefore that thou resistest not. Now we are all invited to the great supper of the Lamb; beware of being busied with oxen and lands, and of ex-

cusing thyself till another time. If thou dost so thou shalt surely never taste his supper. Luke 16. Now is the time in which thou must be born from above, or never see the kingdom of God. John 3. Now is the time in which thou must receive Christ Jesus and believe in him, or endure the wrath of God forever (John 3: 16); for the angel hath sworn by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that are therein, and the earth, and the things that are therein, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. Rev. 10: 6, 7.

This is the mystery of which Christ speaks when he says, Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but the Father only. Matt. 24: 36. Mark 13: 32. And this is the hour that is to come, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation. John 5. For as in Adam all die, (understand a natural death) even so (in the resurrection of the dead) shall all be made alive. But every one in his order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when

he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 1 Cor. 15. For as long as the resurrection of the dead has not arrived, so long is not death destroyed, and so long must Christ reign in his saints, that they may be enabled to conquer death; for through his death he hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and hath delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. Heb. 2: 14, 15.

Though such a deliverance is obtained by the death and resurrection of Christ as enables all saints, through faith in Jesus, to conquer eternal death in the spirit, yet death still retains the power, by means of his poisonous darts, of slaying them according to the flesh; and as long as this death is not destroyed by the resurrection of the dead, so long must Christ reign in his saints against sin, death and the devil. Therefore David in spirit calleth him Lord, as Christ told the pharisees, The Lord said unto my Lord, set thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. Ps. 110: 1. Matt. 22: 14.

Now, until Christ shall come to judgment he will not have made his enemies his foot-

stool; but when he shall come, surrounded with myriads of holy angels, or as Paul expresses it, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.

At this time will heaven and earth, as John saw in the spirit, flee away before his face, and no place be found for them; and the dead, both small and great, shall stand before God, and be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works: For the sea shall give up the dead that be in it; and death and hell shall deliver up their dead (that is the death which hath wrapped mortals in the shroud of silent sleep, and that hell or the grave in which they took their long repose, must deliver up their dead in the resurrection), that every one may be judged according to his works; and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

That is the death which reigned not only over the flesh, but also over the spirit, of the ungodly, who, through sin in their members, brought forth fruit unto death, and had no part with Christ in the first spiritual resurrec-

tion, but kept both soul and body under the dominion of death and hell, by which their tongues were set on fire and their whole course of nature inflamed, and must now be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death; for the temporal, or first death, must deliver them from sleep and the grave unto judgment, and, since spiritual death and hell abide in them, and their names are not written in the book of life, they shall be cast into the lake of fire.

But from all those who have conquered spiritual death and hell in this life through Christ Jesus, and have part with him in his resurrection, temporal death and the grave, as well as the opposition of hell, shall be far removed, nay, shall flee away to the lake of fire; then they in fullness of joy shall sing the triumphant song, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death! where is thy sting? O hell! where is thy victory? (or as the present translation has it, O grave! where is thy victory?) And thank God who giveth them the victory through their Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15. Here apply the words of the prophet Hosea 13: 14, where he speaks of the resurrection of the happy, saying, I will ransom them from the power of hell; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues, O hell, I will be thy destruction. (Or, as our present version has it, I will ran-

som them from the power of the grave; O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave; I will be thy destruction.)

Since Christ has ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, and must reign till he makes his enemies his footstool, and the last enemy destroyed is death, who is destroyed in the resurrection of the dead, we are to consider that heaven is God's throne, and the earth is his footstool (Matt. 5: 34, 35); and since heaven and earth are kept by his word in store, as Peter informs us, (2 Epist. 3,) reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, also the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burnt up; then will the streams be turned into pitch, and the dust into brimstone, and the land into burning pitch, which shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; no one shall pass through it for ever and ever. But before this comes to pass, all those who embrace Christ shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall be forever with the Lord. 1 Thess. 4: 17.

For Noah had first to enter the ark before the flood came over the ungodly and swept them all away (Gen. 7): Lot had first to leave

Sodom before the Lord destroyed it with fire and brimstone. Gen. 19: 22. So also the children of God must have taken their departure out of this world into their Father's kingdom, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, before the earth and the elements are changed and the ungodly hear the sentence, Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25. Then will his enemies be laid at his footstool; for the earth is his footstool, from which, being changed, a smoke shall go up for ever and ever.

When he has, in the resurrection of the dead and in the judgment, put all his enemies under his feet, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. 1 Cor. 15: 27, 28. Remember, he does not say, he has released or exalted his enemies, but he has put them under his feet; that they may no more have it in their power to persecute him, or despise his saints, in whom he has ever suffered persecution. Luke 10: 16.

Then will God wipe away all tears from the eyes of the righteous, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away, and he that sitteth on the throne maketh all things new; as Peter says, We, according to his promise,

look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 2 Peter 3: 13 Is. 65: 17, chap. 66: 22.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and God will be his God and he shall be God's son. But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. Rev. 21.

Now is fulfilled all that God has spoken, threatened, and promised by the mouth of all his prophets, yea by Christ himself; for now unto the righteous is paradise opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come is prepared, plenteousness is made ready, a city is builded, and rest is allowed, yea, perfect goodness and wisdom, the root of evil is sealed up from them, weakness and the moth is hid from them, and corruption is fled into hell to be forgotten; sorrows are passed, and in the end is shown the treasure of immortality. Therefore it was said to Esdras, Ask thou no more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish. For when they had taken liberty, they despised the Most High, thought scorn of his law, and forsook his ways; Moreover they have trodden down his righteous, and said in their heart, there is no God, yea, and that knowing they must die. For as the righteous shall be comforted, so thirst,

pain, and torment are prepared for them. 2 Esdras 8. Luke 16. O how blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Rev. 22: 14.

V.

Come then, ye sinners, who spend your time in the gay and volatile pleasures of the world, open the book of your conscience, and reflect upon your impure, carnal, and ungodly lives, and consider the end of the same, and after the end the judgment, and after the judgment the long vista of eternity, when time shall be no longer, as was sworn by the mighty angel. Rev. 10: 6, 7. Remember that every duration that comes to an end is a time; it may continue a thousand, ten thousand, or a hundred thousand years, yet if there is a limit set to it, it is a time. But after the sound of the last trump and the voice of the archangel, there shall be time no longer, no more time to draw to an end, no more time for repentance and salvation. For if a man lives a hundred years, it is to to eternity as a drop of water to the whole sea. O dreadful eternity! Endless ages replete with horror to the damned; on the contrary, O joyful eternity! Ages of extatic bliss to the saints in heaven. O! who then will be so foolish as to sell, like Esau, his birth-right for a morsel of terrestrial pleasure, and,

thereby, lose the everlasting benediction. Gen. 25: 33, and 27: 30. Heb. 12: 16, 17. O, should not one's flesh tremble for fear when one thinks upon the law of the Lord, (Ps. 119: 120); should we not tremble, like Belshazzar, when with an awakened conscience, we read the holy scriptures, (Dan. 5,) and see the threatenings pronounced by God against all sinners. Oh God! grant that all may see this, before the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain. Eccl. 12: 6.

O ye sons of men! with bruised and contrite hearts, and suppliant hands, draw nigh unto the crucified Savior, and learn wisdom; follow his counsel, and humble yourselves at his feet; let your implacable and revengeful hearts be circumcised, and your cupidity be changed into liberality; lay aside your folly and arrogance, and forsake your dissolute and licentious lives; employ your tongues no more in cursing, swearing, and jesting, but use them in supplication, prayer and entreaty for your salvation: consume your time no longer in reading unprofitable books, but search the holy scriptures, and give ear to the words of God, having the same ingrafted in you, which is able to save your souls. James 1: 21. If you have strife and contention among you, seek peace and reconciliation, and let not the sun go down on your wrath (Eph. 4: 26); for you know not wheth-

er you shall live another day ; nay, it may be you are standing on the very brink of eternity ; put not off repentance and conversion from day to day ; for there is no promise of to-morrow. Therefore be not deceived, my friends, be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap ; he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Gal. 6 : 8.

Therefore take counsel from Christ, and seek the righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ; be not lulled into security by a false reliance upon outward worship, going to church, and acts of benevolence, independent of repentance and true conversion, and of the renovating efficacy of the Holy Spirit ; but endeavor to work out your salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure. Phil. 12 : 13. Strive to enter in at the straight gate : for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Luke 13. Why so ? Because they do not first become poor, vile and humble before God, and put off the old man by grace, so that they may, by faith, put on the new man, but seek and strive to enter in by virtue of good works, almsdeeds, prayer, going to church and outward services, when the heart is far from God, though such per-

sons persuade themselves they possess the peculiar privilege of getting to heaven, so that they have the assurance to say, Have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence, and hast thou not taught in our streets? But with all their reputed good works and flattering expectations, they shall hear the sentence, Depart from me, I know you not.

Therefore, dear man, I repeat it again, circumcise thy heart of flesh, and turn thee unto the Lord thy God, and learn his ways, and thou shalt live. Be not angry with thy brother, nor indulge malice towards thy fellow men; but seek peace, and ensue it; for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. 1 Pet. 3: 11, 12.

O how few take this to heart! How little faith do we find among the children of men! For we may well apply to the present time the words of the prophet, Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongues to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Jer. 9. This is plainly the case in buying and selling, in bartering and trading, as may be seen almost everywhere; for if a man has an article of any kind to sell, he generally

praises it more than he ought, in order that he may sell it to advantage; if there is anything he is desirous of buying, he for the most part disparages it more than is just, merely that he may get it cheap; if two men trade, they try their best, in most instances to cheat one another; but if they cannot do this, they are grieved that they could not commit iniquity. O how little respect is paid to this injunction of Christ, As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise. Matt. 7: 12. Luke 6: 31.

If two men live at variance with one another, each contends strenuously that he is in the right; if you ask one of them concerning the cause of the dispute, it would appear that the other has been the sole instrument of involving him in difficulty; if you inquire of the other, he will tell you he himself is in the right. All this is the result of self-love, which makes a person try to conceal his errors from the observation of mankind. But, O ye men, if you could but see that you stand exposed, in all your nakedness, to the view of Almighty God, who will judge the secrets of your hearts, (Rom. 2: 16,) you would abandon forever your contestations, and each would confess with David, I am the man who has sinned. 1 Chron. 21: 17. For there is scarcely any dispute for which reason cannot be assigned on both sides; therefore let every one humble him-

self, confess his errors, and seek peace and ensue it: for without peace, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12: 14. The angels in heaven rejoiced, appeared unto the shepherds, and exclaimed, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men, (Luke 2: 14,) at the birth of our Saviour; you are willing to be called after his name, and yet desire or seek not the same peace. Therefore I would, in the first place, admonish all married people, who live in strife and contention, that they peruse with diligence the instructions of Christ, and learn therefrom that a man should love his wife as his own flesh, or as Christ loves his church, and has given himself for her. Again, that the wife should be subject to her husband, as her head, even as the church is subject to Christ (Eph. 5. Col. 3: 18, 19); then will their mutual strife soon be at an end; for when evangelical, christian virtue and love exert their influence between married persons, there can be no room for contention and discord, but love and humility will reign between them.

In the second place, I would exhort all contending friends, neighbors and brothers to reflect upon the precepts and example of Christ, and they will soon discover that they are not his disciples; for the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy

and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. James 3: 17. O that all might obtain this wisdom, then would their hatred be changed in love and compassion, their implacability into condonation, and they would be found as children of peace: blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.

But they must first become pure in spirit, sorrowful of soul, meek and mild in heart; they must hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, after his principles and nature, after his love and patience, after his mind and will, that they may, in all respects, be prepared, in him, by him, and through him, to do all things that are pleasing in his sight, in time and eternity. Amen.

Therefore, O man, do not procrastinate; console not thyself with the idea that thou shalt be able in hell to discharge thy sins, but hasten with Lot and flee from the Sodomitish practices of this world, and rescue thy soul, that thou mayest be eternally happy.

God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezek. 33: 11. Ezek. 18.

1. O sons of men! come now and view
And learn true peace to know;
'Tis offered now by Christ to you,
O do not let it go.

2. When both thy offering and thy prayer
Are to the altar brought,

Thou thinkest that thy brother there
In right has 'gainst thee aught;

3. Then go thy way, and wait not long,
Be with him reconciled;
And thou who hast been in the wrong,
Be towards him just and mild.
4. Unless thou art forbearing quite
Unto thy neighbor nigh,
Thou mayest here in thy respect,
Enrage the Lord on high.
5. So that he will not thee forgive,
And wash away thy stains,
Then thou in future worlds shalt live,
In everlasting pains.
6. Eternity! terrific word,
Beyond our mortal ken!
Thou art a sharp two-edged sword,
That wounds the souls of men.
7. Men who lived in sin below
Eternity shall pierce,
They would away from Jesus go,
They lived like heathens fierce.
8. A circle vast, Eternity,
Without an end or bound,
Thy compass is infinity,
Which mortals cannot sound.
9. Reflect upon eternity,
Turn, sinner, to the Lord;
And in thy prayer incessant be,
Till he shall thee reward.
10. Christ's counsel take, keep in his train,
Though crosses thee engage,
That thou be free from tort'ring pain
In an eternal age.
11. Eternity will not seem long
To those who this attain,
For there they'll neither suffer wrong,
Nor cross, nor death, nor pain.

12. Since now their souls are glorified,
Received the heavenly boon,
They shall, since they in God abide,
Outshine the sun at noon.
13. Praise, glory, power, they'll ever sing,
In an eternal round,
To God, the Lamb, the heavenly King,
Who gave to them the crown.

Grant us, O God, peace-loving hearts, believing hearts, hearts in which we may glory in nothing but in Christ and his righteousness, which thou hast freely offered unto us, and which alone is acceptable unto God, that thou mayest be just, and the justifier of us who have faith in the Lord Jesus. O God, pour out thy rich treasure into our earthly vessels, that the abundant power may be of thee, O God, and not of ourselves, and that we may confess thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Ever grant us, heavenly Father, an access by faith unto his grace, that we may establish ourselves therein, and rejoice in the hope of future glory, which hope thou, O God, hast given unto us. Thou hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked, neither is it thy will that any should perish. Therefore, O God, as thou feddest Israel with bread from heaven in the wilderness, and gavest him water out of the rock to drink, so nourish thou our souls with the true bread that descended from heaven, and supply them with the water of the Holy Spirit, which issues in abundance

from the rock Christ Jesus, that we may not perish, but have everlasting life. Grant us, O God, courage and strength to stand firm with Christ in the combat against the world, the devil, and our own flesh and blood, that we may overcome in him who has conquered; and at his second coming may obtain a joyful resurrection, and sing forth the song of praise and triumph, Death is swallowed up in victory, O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? and may thank thee that thou hast given us the victory through Jesus Christ, Amen.

CHAPTER THIRD

Embraces a portion from the 27th verse to the end of the chapter. 1. Of adultery and offending members. 2. Of the married state. 3. Of oaths. 4. A person should not resist evil. 5. A man should be thus minded, not only towards his brethren, but also towards all men. 6. Who are qualified for this.

We will now proceed in the consideration of this sermon on the mount, in order that we may derive therefrom the correct use and understanding of the same for the salvation of our souls. Christ concluded his sermon in these words: Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock; and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. Matt. 7. Luke 6.

Therefore it is of the most vital importance for us to hear the words of Christ and do them, inasmuch as he has the words of eternal life. John 6: 68. Chap. 12: 16. Acts 5: 20. And he that rejecteth him, and receiveth not his words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. John 12: 48.

I.

Well then, ye adulterers and adulteresses, come, see, and hear what Christ declares in this place. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Ex. 20: 14. Lev. 20: 10. But I (who am the perfect teacher of righteousness) say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart. Verses 27, 28.

O, if a person takes a view of the world around him, how many will he find in adultery, not only in looking upon to lust, but taken in the very deed. O how many shameful actions of this kind are manifest in the world; how many run, in shameful concupiscence, after strange women, in order to satisfy their unhallowed desires; indeed I do not know whether there were more incontinence and abomination even in Sodom and Gomorrah, than there are at the present day in the cities and countries of the so named christendom. For how frequently do we hear the report of an illegitimate birth, and that this or that young woman is pregnant, to say nothing of the common prostitutes and public houses of shame, after whom men go, in the words of Solomon, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through the liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not

that it is for his life; for she hath cast down many wounded; yea many strong men have been wounded by her; her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Prov. 7. Paul says, Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, (Heb. 13: 4,) and they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6: 9. Gal. 5: 19. Eph. 5: 5. And not only they that commit the crime, but they that look on a woman to lust after her, have committed it already in their heart; therefore it becomes necessary to pluck out the offending eye that lusteth after impurity and incontinence, and cast it away; for it is profitable that one of the members should perish, and not that the whole body should be cast into hell. Verse 29.

Concerning the offending members which Christ tells us we should pluck out and cast from us, we are to understand, that man is composed or constituted of two parts, the one terrestrial, and the other celestial; as Paul says, There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit: howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, (observe) but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual. 1 Cor. 15.

Now in the natural body we possess an impure, unchaste and animal principle, and

as long as we live after the will of the flesh we bring forth carnal and impure fruits, as Paul declares, The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5); they not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Rom. 1: 32.

But Christ says, Pluck out these members, and cast them from you, that the whole body may not be cast into hell. Verse 30.

Paul says, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry; for which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. Col. 3. Also: know ye not, that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? for the two (saith he) shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 1 Cor. 6.

Therefore, O ye men, who languish in inordinate affection, and go after strange women

till you have satisfied your devilish appetency, think upon your latter end, and repent, and abandon your accursed and disgraceful course of life; pluck out your appetent and impure eye, and cast it from you, lest you be cast into hell, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Mark 9. Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4. Col. 3. For to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Rom. 6: 16. Therefore I counsel you with Paul, that ye yield no longer your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead: and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Rom. 6: 13. For sin shall not have dominion over you, if you yield yourselves to Christ and suffer his grace to reign over you. Verse 14. Oh, I think it is time that you awake and take counsel from Christ, that you may be eternally happy. Oh, but think of the dreadful burning hell that threatens you if you die in your sins! Therefore I repeat it, Awake! awake! for the judge standeth at the door prepared to recompense

every man according to his works; if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. 8. Oh God! grant that this may make a deep impression upon the minds of all who are yet in bondage to sin, that they may daily learn, and sensibly feel in their souls, the tremendous doom that is suspended over them on account of their heinous crimes, and may thereby repent and humble themselves under the hand of thy power, to the preservation of their souls, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

II.

For as much as the world by sin and vice has fallen from its primitive state, Christ has by his gospel reinstated the original order of things, which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh. Rom. 8: 3. For because of the hardness of men's hearts, Moses gave them a writing of divorcement, and permitted them to put away their wives: but from the beginning it was not so (Matt. 19: 8. Mark 10: 5, 6); therefore hath Christ restored the marriage state to its original condition, saying, It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement (Num. 24): But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and

whosoever marrieth her that is divorced, committeth adultery. Verse 32. For from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. Mark 10. Luke 16: 18. Paul says, no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it. Eph. 5: 29. Therefore, since the man and wife are one flesh, they ought not to live together in hatred and discord, but should love and serve each other, should bear patiently with one another in all crosses and tribulations; the wives should submit themselves unto their husbands in the fear of God, as unto the Lord, (Eph. 5: 22,) even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. 1 Pet 3: 6. Likewise the husbands ought to dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. Verse 7. O that this rule might be adopted by all who live in the married state, and that they would love each other as their own flesh, then would contention, bickering and discord find no admittance into their society, and their daily exercise would be patience, harmony and peace.

III.

Our new Lawgiver proceeds: Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. **Ex. 20: 7.** But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head; because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. **Verses 33 to 37.**

Here we see that Christ has totally and explicitly prohibited his followers the employment of an oath, and has given them permission to ratify their cause with nothing more than a yea, yea, or a nay, nay.

For they ought to be children of truth, children of peace, children of God, wrought up after his image into new creatures; for the spiritual likeness, which faded and was lost in Adam, has been restored by Christ: before Adam fell, when he yet lived in paradise, there was no necessity for an oath; for contention and discord were entirely unknown; but when sin and transgression made their entrance and came upon all men, they brought in their train strife and contention; and to adjust the differences arising in con-

sequence, God granted men permission, in the law, to swear a legal oath.

But Christ has come and redeemed his people from their sins, and has translated them from the kingdom of satan through the blood of the everlasting testament to become new creatures, and has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, (Eph. 1 : 3,) and has made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, (Col. 1 : 12,) that they may again have access (by the new and living way of faith which entereth within the vail into the holiest of holies) unto the tree of life, Christ Jesus, and may receive of him grace for grace. John 1 : 16. Hence contention is unknown among them, if they only abide in this grace; they live in peace and concord with one another; they cherish mutual love and unanimity, and do nothing out of a spirit of strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind each esteems the other better than himself; if any one, being overcome by the weakness of the flesh, is overtaken in a fault, the others restore him in the spirit of meekness. Phil. 2. Gal. 6 : 1.

As we see on the day of pentecost: After they received the spirit of grace, they were all of one heart and one mind, united by the law of love and the power of the Holy Spirit, as one in Christ Jesus; they had no more

use for oaths, but transacted their business with yea and nay; and he who spake not the truth, but said yea for nay, and nay for yea, did not escape with impunity, as is instanced in the case of Ananias and his wife, who fell down dead on the spot, because they had not lied unto men but unto God, (Acts 5,) as an awful warning unto all christians that they may not say yea for nay, and nay for yea, but that their yea be yea, and their nay, nay; knowing that whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. Therefore James says, (chap. 5: 12,) Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into temptation.

Now, many are ready to say, that Christ has not forbidden a lawful oath before the magistrate, but only unnecessary and profane swearing.

I answer first: In what way was it necessary for Christ to forbid useless and profane swearing, when it was so strongly prohibited in the law? For it says in the third commandment, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Ex. 20: 7. Also in Lev. 19: 12, it stands written, Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord; also

Deut. 5: 11. And in Lev. 24th, we read that an individual blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed, and had to be stoned to death. Sirach also says, 23d chapter, Accustom not thy mouth to swearing; neither use thyself to the naming of the Holy One. A man that useth much swearing, shall be filled with iniquity, and the plague shall never depart from his house; if he shall offend, his sin shall be upon him: If he acknowledge not his sin, he maketh a double offence; and if he swear in vain, he shall not be innocent, but his house shall be full of calamities.

From this it is evident, that all unnecessary and false swearing was forbidden in the law; therefore Christ said, Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, swear not at all. If now Christ had approved of a legal oath before the magistrate, why did he not express himself in this manner, Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, &c., I say unto you likewise, that ye shall not swear an unnecessary, false, or profane oath, but shall perform unto the Lord your oaths? But he said, I (as a new lawgiver, give you a new commandment) that you swear not at all; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

Here thou wilt reply by bringing in the words of Paul, (Heb. 6: 16,) men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

I answer, that Paul wrote this epistle to his brethren in the faith, and speaks in this place of men that were not members of the christian church, namely the Jews and Gentiles, to whom an oath of confirmation was an end of strife; for he does not say to his brethren in the faith, ye swear by the greater, and an oath of confirmation is to you an end of all strife; but he says, men (observe this) swear by the greater, and an oath of confirmation is to them (mark) an end of all strife. This, therefore, is no proof that a follower of Christ may swear an oath; but it is his duty, in obedience to the command of Christ his king, to testify to his cause with a simple yea or nay, and confirm it with an upright heart before God and man; and there he should let the matter rest.

IV.

Christ, our lawgiver, says in continuation, Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (Ex. 21: 23, 24. Lev. 24: 19, 20); but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Verses 38, 39.

Here Christ prescribes to his followers a

rule of patience and peaceableness, that they shall not avenge themselves nor resist evil, but endure and overcome it in patience and charity; even if a man should smite them on the cheek, they should not proceed according to the law, which calls for vengeance, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but as children of the gospel, which demands peace, reconciliation and forgiveness, they should rather, in patience, turn the other cheek, than strive to take vengeance; for Paul says, Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12: 21.

Christ says further, If any man will sue at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

He first commands us, that if corporal injury should be inflicted upon us, we shall not resist, but shall suffer and endure. Now, he commands us, that if any man shall go to law with us touching the necessities of life, (for he does not speak of our abundance, houses, farms, and the like, but of our coat, which is indispensably necessary as the covering of our bodies; that is, if any one should strip us of all and sue us at the law for our coat or the necessities of life) we shall not contend or go to law with him, but suffer and endure with patience, and keep not back our cloaks, but say with Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, (or, at least, permitted to be taken away) blessed be the name

of the Lord. Job 1: 21. And farther, we should take no thought for our life, what we shall eat; or what we shall drink; nor yet for our body, what we shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? After all these things the Gentiles seek; for our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need for all these things; therefore we ought first to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all these things shall be added unto us. Matt. 6. Luke 12.

For if we should be in want of the necessities of life for Christ's sake, God knows how to provide for his saints; he fed Israel in the wilderness; Elijah by a raven (1 Kings 17: 6); the widow's barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail (verse 16); Daniel was preserved in the lion's den (Dan. 6); and the three children in the fiery furnace. Dan. 3. Also the Lord knoweth how to deliver those who trust in him alone, out of temptations (2 Pet. 2: 9); and if they suffer for righteousness sake, happy are they. 1 Pet. 3: 14.

Reason now comes in and says, If a person was to do thus, he could not get through the world; he would in a short time lose all he had; a person cannot live so strict. These and numerous other objections of a similar kind are stated.

But whence, dear man, does this arise? From this, that thou remainest yet in unbe-

lief, and knowest not the power of God; for if thou hadst true faith in God, possessing within thee the witness that he is thy guide and protector, and has numbered all the hairs of thy head, (Matt. 10 : 30,) thou wouldst intrust and commit all things unto him, and herein follow Christ, fully convinced and persuaded that God will provide for thee in all things, so far as it shall be for the best; and if he permits wicked men at times to take this or that from thee, he does it in order to prove thee whether thou art entirely free from these earthly things. If thou findest that it grieves or troubles thee, only reflect upon what Christ abandoned for thy sake. He that was rich became poor, that thou through his poverty mightest be rich. O shouldst thou not then forsake some of thy temporal goods for his sake, if it should be the will of God? He had not where to lay his head (Luke 9 : 58); does it not then become thee to keep thy heart free from the things of time, as one who is a pilgrim here, (1 Pet. 2 : 11,) and who has his conversation in heaven. Phil. 3 : 20. It behooves thee to meditate and reflect upon these words of Jesus, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. Luke 18 : 29, 30.

Yes, my dear reader, if thou considerest

these things aright in faith, and subjectest thy will unto God, then wilt thou bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, (2 Cor. 10: 5,) and with Moses and Paul wilt esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of the earth. Heb. 11: 26. Phil. 3: 8.

But here it is necessary for a person to become a partaker of the benedictions in the introduction to this sermon on the mount, and be born, through the eight grades of blessings, a peaceable child of God, that he may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of his boundless love; (Eph. 3: 18,) and the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus; and all, who are made partakers of this, will not consider it as a burden to receive these christian precepts in a spirit of patience and obedience, and follow their head, for they know in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Heb. 10: 34.

O how few such christians are to be found at this day! How few that are not engaged in contention and law suits! How few that do not defend their coat, to say nothing of giving the cloak also! How few that follow Christ and observe this injunction, Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. Luke 6: 30.

The holy and amiable apostle John says, Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby we know that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2: 3 to 6.

Since the so named christians do not keep or do the commandments of Christ, it is an easy matter to prove that they do not know him; now, that they say they know him, while they do not keep his commandments, they speak lies and the truth is not in them.

Moreover, because they do not keep his words, the love of God is not in them; for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5: 2, 3. Therefore Christ also says: If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. John 15: 7 to 10.

My worthy reader, thou canst here see that love consists in keeping the commandments of God, and all who walk not in his commandments, nor submit themselves to Christ, even as he was subject and obedient to his Father, are not in the love, neither do they know the love of God; though they may speak much and boast highly of it, yet it is but an imagined love which a man in a false light arrogates to himself to the betraying of his own soul. For a servant that loves his master from his heart, cannot be otherwise than obedient to him in all he commands; a faithful subject who loves his king, cannot do otherwise than keep his commands and be obedient even unto death; a child that sincerely loves and fears his father, cannot but show himself faithful and obedient; even so, a child of God and a disciple of Christ, who loves and fears God in his heart, cannot but exhibit himself faithful and obedient, keeping his commandments even unto death, not for the recompense of the reward but for this that the love of God abideth in him; therefore Christ declares, Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matt. 7: 21.

God, the heavenly Father, has manifested his will through Jesus Christ, as Christ himself says: I have not spoken of myself; but the Father, who sent me, he gave me a com-

mandment what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. John 12: 49, 50.

Since now Christ has manifested unto us in his gospel the will of his Father, and has given his commandments which are eternal life to all who by grace keep and do them.

Therefore did Moses, the first lawgiver, direct us from himself unto Christ, and say, The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken, (Deut. 18); And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Acts. 3: 22, 23.

Reflect upon this, ye men, who, according to the Mosaic law, demand vengeance, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; that is, if a man injures you, you endeavor to retaliate, if any person smites you on the cheek you smite him in turn, and if a man sues you and goes to law about a little of this world's goods, you are immediately willing to carry on the suit, and bring one another before the court, oftentimes more out of ill will and hatred than on account of the damage; in such cases men do not look to money, though the cost should exceed the sum in dispute; for they contend merely to gain the cause; when

that is done all is well, the gainer thinks he has done something great.

But, dear man, who boastest thyself a christian, where abides the doctrine of Christ? where are thy imitation and obedience? If thou wilt walk according to the law, why dost thou glory in a christian's name? For if thou wast, in truth, a christian, Christ would be to thee an end of the law; the vengeance of the law must be changed into the love of the gospel; thy envy and impatience must be converted into meekness and forbearance, so that thou mayest hate thy enemy no longer according to the law, but mayest be enabled, agreeably to the commandment of Christ, to love him, to bless them that curse thee, to do good to them that hate thee, and pray for them which despitefully use thee, and persecute thee; and mayest evidencce by thy fruits that thou art a child of thy Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust. Verses 43: 44, 45.

Now, dear man, inasmuch as thou art not in possession of these fruits, art yet revengeful, recompensest evil with evil, hatest thy enemy and triest to injure him, suest and goest to law, returnest force for force, and the like, which Christ has expressly forbidden in his gospel, and wo be to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; for they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from

the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 1 Thessa. 1 : 8, 9.

Learn from this, that as long as thou, in accordance with the law, takest revenge upon thy enemy or adversary, and renderest evil for evil, thou art no christian. Thou mayest be a christian in the eyes of the world, but not in the sight of God ; for thou hast not the disposition of Christ, thou hast not the mind that was in Christ, (Phil. 2 : 5,) thou obeyest not his doctrine ; and whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. 2 John, verse 9. But if thou wilt console thyself with Moses, appealing to him, like the pharisees, that he permitted and approved such things, then will be applicable to you what Christ said to the pharisees, Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father ; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust ; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me ; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ? John 5. Gen. 3 : 15, and 22 : 18, and 49 : 10. For Moses said, A prophet will the Lord raise up unto you like unto me ; him shall ye hear. Now how is it possible for you to exculpate yourselves by appealing to Moses, who refers you so faithfully to Christ, the perfect law-giver, that ye shall hear him ?

O miserable men, who boast yourselves christians, and receive neither the counsel of

Moses nor the word of Christ, what will be your end and eternal destiny! Think ye that his word is but a fable and an indifferent history? Ah no, no. Ye will find it quite different when it shall stand as your judge. For though you may have prophesied, cast out devils, and done many mighty wonders in his name, yet he will not know you. For those only, who hear and do these sayings, are the wise men who have built upon the rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Matt. 16: 18. Those only, who abide in the doctrine of Christ, have both the Father and the Son. 2 John, verse 9. With those only who love Christ and keep his word, will the eternal Divinity make his abode. John 14: 23.

Therefore, dear man, contend no longer with thy God, for he is a consuming fire, and it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands. Behold, against him thou canst accomplish nothing; therefore humble thyself before him; lay down thy weapons, and take hold of the sceptre of his mercy, and follow Christ in all that he commandeth thee, and thou shalt live, and live forever through Jesus Christ. Amen.

V.

Now some will grant that brethren of the same persuasion ought not to go to law with one another, inasmuch as Paul reproveth the

church at Corinth sharply for this very thing, saying, Now there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, you do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. 1 Cor. But they, nevertheless, think they are at liberty to go to law with those who do not belong to their denomination.

But I wish that all such persons might receive instructions from Christ, and hear his doctrine; they would then in a short time perceive their mistake. For Christ says, If ye love those who love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. Verses 46, 47, 48.

Behold, dear man, we ought to be perfect, even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect. That is, we ought in this life to exercise meekness and patience towards all men, even as the Father makes his sun to rise upon the evil and on the good, and sends his rain on the just and on the unjust, and is long suffering towards them, even when they offend him and despise his laws; that we also ought to be perfect and do good to all men, not only to our brethren or those who

love us, but to our enemies who injure and wrong us, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. Matt. 5: 16.

But this is a hard saying, who can hear it? John 6: 60.

VI.

None but those who are dead to themselves and to the world; whose old man is crucified with Christ, (Rom. 6: 1,) and who are dead to the law by the body of Christ, (Rom. 7: 4) that they might bring forth fruit unto God through the love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, by which they are bound and united unto God; for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (1 John 4: 11); and this love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13: 10. For it knows no revenge; no retaliation of injuries, but is patient and peaceable, mild and merciful; yea, this love or charity is long suffering and kind to friends and enemies; charity envieth not with a gross natural envy, for it subdues this and renders a man's disposition mild and pacific; charity vaunteth not, is not puffed up, does not conduct with a carnal and arrogant mind towards those who have fallen into error, does not behave unseemly towards them, she seeketh not her own advantage, but that of others, and is concerned for her neighbor's welfare as much as for her own; she is not

easily provoked by those who do not the same to her; thinketh no evil on that account, yet rejoiceth not in such iniquity, nay she is sorry for it and sendeth her complaint to God (Matt. 18: 31); but she rejoiceth in the truth. O her greatest pleasure is when she meeteth this; she beareth everything, knowing that it comes from beloved hands; she believeth all things, therefore all things serve for the best; she hopeth to obtain all things that are prepared for her in heaven, therefore she endureth in patience all that befalleth her here in this life. 1 Cor. 13. Love is not deceptive, is without dissimulation, without hypocrisy, and opposed to evil, abhors that which is bad, avoids that which is evil, but cleaves to that which is good, as being the spirit of life and of power. Rom. 12: 9. The men who possess this love, are those to whom the yoke of Christ is easy and his burden light; such persons can say, his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5: 3. O that all men possessed this love! then the lawyer and the judge, the king and the magistrate would be needed no more, but Christ would be all in all.

1. O Jesus, thou eternal Lord!
Thy doctrine saves us here.
But where's the man believes thy word,
And lends a willing ear?
2. O very, very few we find,
That in obedience are,
The world and gold employ their mind,
And form their serious care.

3. Men go to law for goods below,
As if they here could stay.
Though surely every one must know,
How soon he must away.
4. What help will then the world afford?
What solace then supply?
None, none but Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Can give us life on high.
5. Therefore, ye men, both low and high,
Yourselves to Jesus give,
This doctrine fellow, and oh, try
Unto his will to live.
6. Deny yourselves, have minds of peace,
Like Christ, without alloy.
That satan's power may quickly cease,
And not your souls destroy.
7. Stronger far than death, is love,
No water makes it cold.
He who has it, has God above,
Who will him firm uphold.
8. Thou ornament of saints, O love,
In thee their soul is elad,
Thou dost her pure affections move,
With Christ the Lord to wed.
9. As faithful bride she does agree,
In his commands to live,
And hence in vast eternity
The crown of life he'll give.

O blessed Jesus, instructor and head of thy church, the Alpha and Omega, the author and finisher of our faith, the fulfilment of the law, priest, mediator, and advocate of our souls, thou who wast constrained, by thy great mercy and deep compassion, to take upon thee the form of a servant, so that thou hast assumed our weakness, and become our instructor, forerunner, way, and truth, and

hast left us an example, that we should follow thy steps: but we as sinful, earthly and impure vessels, are by nature entirely incapable of knowing thee in thy divine attributes, and of apprehending thy blessed doctrine. For we are by nature carnal, but thy words are spiritual, in which is concealed thy spiritual life, the divine way wherein thou walkedst, thy spiritual light and hidden manna. O Jesus! who are the men that can teach us this spiritual way, unless thou goest with us to the work, openest our blind eyes, grantest hearing and speech to us deaf and dumb creatures, that we may be able to see, hear and speak in a spiritual manner, and enter through the gates of death into life, and live in thee, as thou livest in the Father, that we may in thee and thou in us, as thou in the Father and the Father in thee, enjoy the perfect fellowship of the Holy Spirit. O Jesus, grant us a portion of this grace, that our hearts may be inflamed with thy love; destroy in us all envy and bitterness, so that we may, through this charity, love our enemies, do good to them that hate us and persecute us, pray for them that injure us, bless those that curse us, that we may be perfect in thee, and walk even as thou hast walked; for thy walk was according to the will of thy Father, and thy meat was to do his will; thy doctrine and obedience, crucifixion and death, resurrection and ascension,

were for our sakes : so likewise, O Jesus, ought our walk to be according to thy will, and our meat should be to do thy will ; and our obedience, cross and temptation, yea our justification and everlasting redemption are for thy sake, that we may honor thee, O Jesus, even as we honor the Father. Amen, O my soul. For what should separate thee from the love thou hast tasted in Jesus ; if he is thy head and bridegroom, and has given thee the token of his love, preserve it till he comes. Amen, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

CHAPTER FOURTH

Embraces a part of the 5th chapter, from the 1st to the 4th verse, and treats of the manner in which alms should be given.

Beloved reader, the Lord Jesus has shown us, in the commencement of his sermon, the beginning of, and introduction to a christian life: he has disclosed to us the fact that it is necessary for us, in humility of spirit and godly sorrow, to die to the world and our own selves, and to advance through real hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ from one degree to another, till finally we be filled with all the fulness of God; and this superabundant grace can then bring forth and produce nothing but the blessed fruits of righteousness, namely faith, hope, love, patience, true obedience and a godly conversation in the world, that we may shine as lights in the midst of an adulterous and perverse generation, holding forth at the same time the word of eternal life. Phil. 2: 15, 16.

For to all, who come to the life of a real christian, the law is made gospel, that is, revenge is changed into love; rigor into lenity and compassion; the joy and delight of the world, into heavenly joy and godly pleasure, for their treasure is not on earth but in heaven; there is their privilege of citizenship;

their conversation, their building of God (2 Cor. 5: 1); their whole fellowship is with the faithful on earth and with the saints in heaven (Heb. 12: 22, 23. Gal. 4: 26); their looking up is unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith (Heb. 12: 2); he is their head, and they his members (Rom. 12. 1. Cor. 12. Eph. 1: 22, 23); hence they follow their head and shepherd; (John 10) they are moved and bent by his will, the Head watches over the members and points out to them the way in which they cannot err, (Is. 30: 20, 21. 35: 8, 9) provided they abide in grace, as members of the body, the body being dependent on the head, or as members of the church, the church being dependent on Christ; for without him they can do nothing (John 15), but if they abide in him as the branch in the vine, they shall bring forth much fruit, and their fruit shall endure unto eternal life.

For as much as Christ, the true Head of all believers, was well aware that we bear about the flesh of sin and corruption, whose inclination is very earthly, withdrawing us from his grace, and thereby exposing us to many dangers, he declared unto us, Watch, and what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch (Mark 13); he has moreover in his divine discourse given us a rule by which we should regulate our conduct in the giving of alms, and prove whether it is done through

grace and charity to the honor of God or not. Therefore ye faithful on earth, who bear the burden of Christ, let us once more come before this mirror of divine doctrine, and view ourselves, and see whether our almsgiving is pure and sincere in his sight, whether it is done in the manner in which our Head and King recommends, or whether we may not be among the number of those who have their reward.

For he says, Take heed (that is, observe well and consider) that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before them as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest thy alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly. Matt. 6: 1 to 4.

Here we learn that we ought to be affected with a spirit of humility and liberality towards our poor neighbor in seasons of want and embarrassment, and should assist him, imparting to his necessity with a liberal hand: as Paul tells us, To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Heb. 13: 16.

Again he says to Timothy, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. 6.

But this must be done in true humility and willingness of mind, as we know a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses (Luke 12: 15); for he who soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9: 6, 7. Sir. 35: 11, 12.

We should always keep in view that the earth is the Lord's and the things therein (1 Cor. 10: 26) and that he has bestowed upon us the good things of this life for the use of ourselves and others. Therefore we should distribute, not as if they were our own gifts, but the Lord's, who first gave them to us, that we should manage and truly husband them, as Christ said of the unjust steward when about to be removed from his office: he said within himself, I am resolved what

to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? He said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty. (And the rest.) And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely. Now, let every one take this steward for an example; for Christ tells us, And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations, Luke 16.

If we wish rightly to understand this parable, we must consider God as the rich man, and ourselves as the stewards; for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and he imparts unto every man according to his will; we should therefore manage faithfully, for he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much; if, therefore, we are not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to our trust the true riches? (Verse 11.) As now the steward acted towards his lord's debtors, that they might, if he failed, receive him into their houses, so should we, who are appointed by God to be stewards of the good things

of this life, act towards our poor and afflicted brethren. He bestowed, not upon his own creditors his own money or goods, but his lord's. So, when we give, bestow, or communicate something, we ought not to think that we give it of our own, but of the Lord's; for in a strict sense we cannot appropriate to ourselves any more than what is necessary to supply our daily wants; all the rest is the property of others: for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 1 Tim. 6: 7. The steward did not think it hard to distribute his lord's goods: so we also, when we consider that we do not possess our own but our Lord's goods, will not take it hard to distribute them to poor people in distress, especially to the faithful in Christ. He did it that, if he would have to fail, they might receive him into their houses: we ought likewise to make to ourselves friends of (or by) this mammon, that they may receive us into everlasting habitations, through the instrumentality of their prayers and thanksgivings, as Paul clearly explains it, Cor. 9th chapter 12, 13, 14 verses.

Therefore Tobit said to his son, Give alms of thy substance; and when thou givest alms, let not thine eye be envious, neither turn thy face from any poor, and the face of God shall not be turned away from thee. If

thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly; if thou hast but little, be not afraid to give according to that little: for thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity. Because that alms do deliver from death, and suffer not to come into darkness. For alms is a good gift unto all that give it in the sight of the Most High. Tobit 4: 7 to 12. Sirach says, Lose thy money for thy brother and thy friend, and let it not rust under a stone to be lost. Lay up thy treasure according to the commandments of the Most High and it shall bring thee more profit than gold. Eccl. 29: 10, 11. Paul also says, As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gal. 6: 10.

From this it is evident that it is enjoined upon us as a duty to show mercy to all men in distress; for mercy rejoiceth against judgment, (James 2: 13,) especially to those who believe in Christ, for what we do unto the least of those who believe in Christ, the same we do unto him. Matt. 25: 40.

The steward was commended by his lord because he had done wisely: so will Christ our Lord commend all those who have dealt thus with his servants and disciples, and will say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was a hungered

and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in, &c. Matt. 25.

Therefore I repeat it that we ought to make use of the property, which by the law of man belongs unto us, but by the law of God belongs unto the Lord, in the manner above explained; for if, when we give alms, we pride ourselves in it, we have our reward: for in this as well as in other things we should say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do; Luke 17: 10. Learn from this that thou must die in humility to the world and thy own self, and must live by love unto God, before thou art able to use the world as not abusing it, and enjoy the world as though thou didst not possess it, 1 Cor. 7: 30 31. For if we do not give our alms through this acknowledgment and a divine charity as gifts of the Lord, but give them as our own, that we may be seen of men, and are puffed up, then our left hand knows what the right hand is doing, and we have our reward.

But if we distribute them as the goods of the Lord and not as our own property, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing, that is, our carnal mind will be restrained by the internal spiritual mind, and by the true hand of faith from arrogating anything to itself. Therefore the righteous will answer and say, Lord when did we do this

and that thing unto thee? Then he will reply, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matt. 25: 40.

O God! grant us bountiful hearts, as thou thyself art bountiful, giving us seed to sow and bread to eat, that we may give willingly and render assistance to all necessitous and afflicted men, that we may lay up a treasure for the time to come and may glorify thee in all thy benefactions, through Jesus Christ, now and forever, Amen.

O blessed God of heaven,
Thou who so bounteously,
In world of sorrow even
Support'st us graciously;

And hast richly given
As needed has our case,
What serves us while we're living
Here in the time of grace.

In this we do confess thee,
Thy gifts we look upon,
And saying, Father, bless thee,
Through Jesus Christ thy Son.

Such hearts, O do but give us,
That willingly may grant
To those in need so grievous,
When known they make their want.

Before thee, God of heaven,
In calm humility;
For all is thine, yea, even
All mortal eye can see.

House, land, and every blessing,
All free from thee descend,
That we, in times distressing,
Our brethren may befriend.

Amen.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

Embraces a portion from the 5th verse to the 15th. 1. An address to the reader. 2. Of the prayer of the old and new pharisees. 3. Whose prayer is acceptable to God. 4. Treats of the Lord's prayer. (1. Who can pray to the Father as Father. 2. In whom the name of God is glorified. 3. Who can pray for the kingdom of God. 4. Who can say in truth, Lord, thy will be done.) 5. Who are qualified to pray Give us our daily bread. 6. Who pray in truth, Forgive us our debts. 7. Who may answer God, As we have forgiven our debtors. 8. Who in truth can pray, Lead us not into temptation. 9. And who desire from their hearts to be delivered from evil.

I.

Gentle and inquiring reader! If thou hast proved, in the perusal of this treatise, that thou art such a christian, or at least willing to become such a one as is described in the four preceding chapters, then go on to cleanse thyself from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of God. 2 Cor. 7: 1.

For Christ ever gives us signs and admonitions by which we should compare our condition and examine whether we are in true grace or not; for a man can receive grace of God by which his heart shall be, in part, changed, and his life and conversation ameliorated. But if he is not completely subjected to this grace, so that it can work in

him according to the good pleasure of God, he remains stationary, yea, not stationary, but begins to retrograde and fails of the grace of God; from which a bitter root springs up, and causes great trouble, so that by it many are defiled. Heb. 12: 15.

For a Demas can again love this present world, (2 Tim. 4: 10,) Hymeneus and Alexander made shipwreck concerning the faith, and learned to blaspheme, (1 Tim. 1: 19, 20. Chap. 6: 10); Phygellus and Hermogenes turned away from Paul (2 Tim. 1: 15); some among the Corinthians denied the resurrection of the dead, (1 Cor. 15: 12,) and the Galatians, having begun in the spirit, desired to be perfected by the flesh, (Gal. 3); the Hebrews, who for the time ought to have been teachers, had need for some one to teach them again the first principles of the oracles of God (Chap. 5: 12); the church at Ephesus left her first love, (Rev. 2: 4); the church of the Laodiceans became rich and increased with goods, supposed she had need of nothing, and knew not that she was wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Rev. 3: 17.

Many examples of a similar kind could be adduced, tending to show, that it is of the highest importance for men, constantly to watch and pray; and this in spirit and in truth, for God is a spirit, and seeketh such worshippers as worship him in spirit and in

truth, (John 4: 23, 24); for all prayers are not offered up aright; the heart must harmonize with the prayer; we must desire from our heart what we pray for, or our prayer is not rightly offered up; and whatsoever God declares unto us by his word and Spirit, the same we must do willingly, or our prayer will be of no avail: For many pray with the mouth for what the heart does not desire; to them may be applied the words of the prophet and of Christ, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. Is. 29: 13. Matt. 15: 8. O what mockery! for a man to draw nigh to God with his mouth when his heart is far from him! Ah reader, be not deceived; God is not mocked: he searcheth thy heart; he trieth thy heart; he demandeth thy heart: for it reads, My son, give me thy heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways, Proverbs 23: 26.

David says, The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ps. 51: 19. Also, The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, (Ps. 34: 18); He looketh to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word. Is. 66: 2. Behold, reader, such hearts are qualified to pray; therefore examine well whether thine is thus disposed, whether thy sighs proceed from the

depth of thy soul, and whether thy spirit longs incessantly after grace. For the true longing of heart after grace is the unremitting prayer, which cries day and night to God, which does not at all times break forth in words, but in thoughts and groans; and if at times in words, the words accord with the emotions of the heart; and this is to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Now, if a person does not pray in this manner, but, from practice, makes this or that form of prayer, or learns fine and spiritual prayers out of books, and prates them with the mouth without the accordance of the heart: to such the Lord declares, When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me: the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with. Isaiah 1: 12, 13.

II.

Christ, therefore, in this blessed discourse, charges believers to take heed saying, When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Verse 5.

This was the practice among the apostate

Jews as regards the scribes and pharisees; and it is now the practice among the apostate Christians and the new scribes and pharisees, who not born of God have planned and adopted a system of faith adjusted in fit proportions to the will of the flesh, so that their godliness is mere gain or profession. 1 Tim. 6 : 5.

For as the former did all their works to be seen of men, so do the latter; and as they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments, so do these; the former loved greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, the same obtains with the latter; and as the former devoured widow's houses, and for a pretence made long prayers, therefor receiving greater damnation, so also the latter. For these new and high learned pharisees can scarcely do anything gratis but must have high salaries, preach for filthy lucre's sake, drawing after them men having itching ears; they also devour the houses of the poor and of widows, they strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, (Matt. 23); as the Lord says by the mouth of the prophet Micah, Chap. 3 : 5. They bite with their teeth and cry Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

This is shown by the fruit; for if one of their hearers, perhaps from indigence or poverty, does not pay his stipends, he will soon

be despised and rejected; they prepare war and calamity for him. But those who impart to them liberally, salute them kindly, style them Rabbi and Doctors of Divinity, will be commended as pious christians; even if they live in pride, drunkenness, lies and deceit, and the like abominable practices, yet they shall be happy. These are they who do not seek the sheep or the souls, but the wool, or their money; they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Rom. 16: 18. Phil. 3: 19. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works, 2 Cor. 11: 13, 14, 15. Christ says to his disciples, Freely ye have received, freely give. Matt. 10: 8. But these men have not received freely from God, but have by the aid of money acquired their power from men, in the seminaries of learning, in the same manner that lawyers gain the knowledge of jurisprudence; therefore they cannot give freely, but must have high pay for their preaching. Now a person might well say to the people, Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread

(or right instruction,) and your labor for that which satisfieth not? O, come to Jesus, and buy wine and milk without money and without price, (Is. 55,) that your souls may live.

But as the hardened Jews, at the time of Christ, always considered the scribes as the true teachers, and for this reason would not receive the Lord Jesus, the true teacher, but cried out, Crucify him! crucify him! so the bewitched and hardened christians who know not the mystery of God, are ever of the opinion that those who have studied the scriptures in the theological seminaries must surely be the true teachers, though it is nothing but human wisdom which has enlightened their minds while the heart remains unchanged. Hence it is mere foolishness in the sight of God, for Paul says, Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath God not made foolish the wisdom of this world? Yea not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence, 1 Cor. 1.

Therefore, Christ chose for his apostles

poor fishermen who were unlearned, and of the laity, and had no need to receive instruction in schools of science; for the spirit of God was their teacher, and gave them what they should speak, as the Lord had promised. Matt. 10: 19, 20. Mark 13: 11. John 14: 26.

But these men must study from their youth up and learn how and what they shall speak, as a mechanic must first learn of another and fix in his mind how this and that thing is to be done, before he becomes master of his trade. The same course is pursued by these teachers; hence their godliness is but gain. 1 Tim. 6: 5.

Paul says, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter but of the spirit. 2 Cor. 3: 5, 6. Perhaps some one will say, Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Undoubtedly; but as long as Paul depended upon his own learning, he remained blind and ignorant in spiritual things, so much so that he persecuted the church of God. But as soon as he was enlightened by Christ and instructed by the Holy Spirit, he counted all his former erudition as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. Phil. 3. Therefore, he says in one place, I certify you, brethren, that the gospel preach-

ed of me is not of man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, (mark) but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, Gal. 1: 11, 12.

Learn from this that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not the erudition of man, but the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, (Rom. 1: 16,) and that this power of God is not to be obtained in high schools of literature from any man depending upon his natural reason, but from God, in poorness of spirit, and in the humble school of Christ through regeneration and the renovating efficacy of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 11.

Similarly circumstanced is the prayer which a person commits to memory and utters with his lips independent of any feeling or concurrent emotion of the soul; it is altogether impure and an abomination unto the Lord; for to the defiled is nothing pure, they are unto every good work reprobate. Tit. 1: 15, 16. Therefore Paul says, We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Rom. 8: 26, 27.

This mode of praying was not adopted by the pharisees; they composed their prayers

in a style of great elegance, so as to be seen of men; therefore they received the greater damnation. Matt. 25: 14.

And in this pharisaic manner many thousands pray at the present time, that they may be seen of men, and think they are doing God service, when, at the same time they have their reward. Yea, even among those who are in part enlightened, and who pray, not entirely from external abilities, but from internal knowledge and experience, there are persons who frequently become elevated in their prayers, and express themselves in elegant terms before men, merely that they may be seen of them, as the experience of every one will too strongly inform him. O, there is great danger that the spirit of satan will exhibit himself in everything, and elevate a person into the high and airy regions of fancy, yea, set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and cast him down from thence, but in a manner not to excite any apprehensions of danger, as though God had given his angels charge to bear us up in their hands. Matt. 4. O, it is greatly to be feared that many enlightened and partially converted men are, in consequence of the lofty conceit in their preaching, praying, singing and pious exercises, cast down to hell, and, like the foolish virgins, are not aware of it till it is too late. Matt. 25. Therefore Christ has truly admonished us, that we take heed; that

we seek no honor from men in our alms, praying and exercises, but always, as in the divine presence, walk, act and speak in God; as Paul says, We are not as many, who corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. 2 Cor. 2: 17.

III.

Benign and inquiring reader! scan thyself well, be thou a teacher or one of the common people, and examine in all thy religious exercises whether thy entire worship is performed for the Lord's sake, and whether thou art impelled by the Spirit and power of love to the performance of all thy services for the glory of God; whether thy own honor and advantage are not the motives which influence thee; or whether thy worship is not merely an external adopted plan or model of religion, as is the case, it is to be feared, with numbers at the present day. Is it the case with thee? If so, consider that God will not be recompensed with words or works, but he will have an humble and a contrite heart, and a resigned will wherein himself will work by the power of his Spirit, that the praise may not be of ourselves, but from God; for he is zealous for his glory, and his praise he will not give to graven images, (Isaiah 42: 8. Is. 48: 11) inasmuch as it is he that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure

(Phil. 2: 13); not of our own good pleasure, for we know not his ways, but of his good pleasure, that we may learn to know his ways, so that he may take pleasure and be glorified in us to his praise.

Therefore, Christ continues, But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. Verse 6.

This is the rule for all sincere worshippers, who worship God not merely with the lips, but in spirit and in truth; who turn into the closet of their heart, and, having barred it against the world and all vain and airy imaginations, open their minds unto God in the Spirit, who sees the secrets of the heart and knows our inmost desires; for he is not a God afar off, but a god who is near at hand (Is. 55); he knows what we need before we ask him; he has regard to the desires of our souls, and not to the multiplicity of words; he looks upon a broken and a contrite heart, an offering in which the Lord is well pleased. Ps. 51: 19. Therefore it behooves us, above all things, at time of prayer, whether in weakness or necessity, whether in public or private, to collect our thoughts and commit ourselves entirely unto God and his guidance, without feeling anxious how or in what words we shall pray; then will the

Spirit of God help our infirmities and make intercession for us, according to the will of God, with groanings that cannot be uttered. Rom. 8. And, if our prayer will not at all times flow with like power, we must preserve patience, bow ourselves down to his will, and commit all to his pleasure, knowing that every good gift cometh from above. James 1: 17. For God giveth and taketh away, he leadeth in and bringeth out, (John 10) and for the sole purpose of divesting us entirely of self; and the more completely we are divested of self, the more abundantly will our souls find pasture; the more perfectly we are lost to ourselves, that is, dead to our own ability, the more abundant power we shall find in God. Of this I have had hitherto very frequent experience; and it is my desire to walk in self-denial, and live a life well pleasing in the sight of the Lord, that God alone may be all in me, and I all in him. For in God I find everything, and out of God I find nothing: in God I find peace and pleasure, when without there is trouble; out of God I find disquietude and intranquillity when external appearance is fine and beautiful. And should I not be subject unto this blessed God of love and consolation, who knows my necessity and at the same time provides for me and supplies my wants? O wonderful God of love! when thine are in distress thou consolest them as a compassion-

ate mother; but if they obey not thy call and forget their duty, thou chastisest them as an earnest and affectionate father, that in consequence of thy chastisement they may become faithful children, and make white their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Behold, reader, this is the proper mode of prayer for believers who do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen, but commit themselves in the Spirit to the Spirit of God, who enables them to pray above all they know or think, according to the power that worketh in them. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. 3: 20, 21.

IV.

Now, my reader, Christ in continuation gives to his disciples, or believers, a short form of prayer, in which is contained the complete outline of true and evangelic prayer. For he says, first, we should pray,

1. *Our Father who art in heaven.*

Now, to utter this in the spirit of truth, is a matter of great importance, and should be well considered by all; for, if in prayer we call God our father, we must be his children, begotten of his own will with the word of truth, that we may be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. James 1: 18. For to them he has given power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,

which are born not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1: 12, 13); those only, saith the Lord, who come out from all unrighteousness, separate themselves, and touch not the unclean thing, will he receive and be a father unto them; and they shall be his sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. 6.

Therefore it is the duty of every one, when he calls God his Father, to examine whether he is born of him, whether he loves him with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength, whether he is obedient in all he has commanded, whether he seeks from his heart and possesses the communion of the Spirit; for God is a spirit and will have such worshippers as worship him in spirit and in truth, (John 4); and such spiritual worshippers have received from Christ the privilege of calling God their spiritual Father, inasmuch as he has given them power to become the children of God. Therefore, Christ says to Mary, Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. John 20: 17. Heb. 2. And Paul says, Thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Gal. 4: 6, 7. But on the other hand, if a carnal-minded man, one who lives according to the lusts of the flesh, doing the will thereof, should call God his Father, he utters a falsehood, as

Christ replied to the Jews when they told him God was their Father, If God was your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. John 8.

In this manner will Christ say to all carnal minded Christians who call God their Father; for they love him not, neither understand his speech, they will not hear his word, nor do it, but teach for doctrines the commandments of men, (Matt. 15 : 8, 9,) walk in the ways of the world, and follow the prince of the power of the air that worketh in them. Hence they are his children; for he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, (understand, after the inner man,) because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness (that is, whosoever doth not obey God) is not of God. 1 John 3.

From this the following inference naturally arises: if thou art not yet born of God, if

thou submittest not in entire obedience to his word and salutary guidance, but livest in the old creature according to the will of the flesh, the delight of the eye, the desire of life, and the pride of the world, and art not made subject unto Christ, so that he is thy wisdom, thy righteousness, thy sanctification, and thy redemption or deliverance from sins; God is not thy Father, but thy father is the devil, whose works thou doest.

2. *Hallowed be thy name.*

Now, how can the name of God be hallowed in us, so long as we remain in our sins, and by our works virtually deny his name?

Tit. 1: 16. Of such worshippers or formal Christians the Lord might say as he did of Israel in former times, They behave as the heathen, whither they have gone, and profane my holy name. Ezek. 36: 20. For among such men the name of God is blasphemed, not hallowed. Rom. 2: 24.

But if we would have the name of God hallowed in us and by us, we must first be born of God, must walk in holiness of life, and live no more to our own will, but to the will of God, must honor and glorify him in all things, magnify his name, and defend and confess his word and truth before all men, as the three men before Nebuchadnezzar, (Daniel 3,) Daniel before Darius, (Chap. 6,) the apostles before the council, (Acts 5,) Stephen

when he was stoned, (Acts 7,) Paul among the Jews and gentiles, (2 Cor. 11,) the Martyrs in the midst of fire and sword. Then is the name of God hallowed and glorified, when nothing separates us from his love. For the glory of a king is never more exalted than when his subjects are faithful and obedient. So also the name of God is hallowed, and his honor glorified in nothing more than in the keeping of his commandments ; because the love of God consists in keeping his commandments. John 14 : 23. 1 John 5 : 2, 3.

3. *Thy kingdom come.*

Now, how can a man pray for the kingdom of God to come, who is yet desirous of living in the kingdom of the devil, in hatred and envy, in warring and bloodshed, in pleasure, pomp, pride, and all the folly of this world ; while the kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of peace and love, a kingdom of humility and meekness ; a kingdom in which men do not war with the carnal weapons of warfare, in order that they may pull down strong holds, cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Ah no, a man, who does not deny himself and hallow the name of God, cannot in truth offer up this prayer. If he does it from habit, he prays for what he does not desire, and is, in the

sight of God, a liar and a hypocrite, in consequence of which he shall receive the greater damnation.

Hence he must be one who has renounced the devil and his kingdom, and does daily renounce them; who seek in his heart the kingdom of God, and lives and aspires after his righteousness. Such a one, I say, prays in earnest that the kingdom of Jesus Christ may come into all inquiring souls, that his name may be made known to the nations, and his word spread abroad in the earth to the praise of his power.

4. *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

How can a man pray for the Lord's will to be done, when he does not desire his will, but lives after his own will, walking according to his own inclination, and not according to the word or will of God? Ah no, such a one draws nigh unto God with his mouth, but his heart is far from him.

For, if a man prays "thy will be done," and God sends him crosses, tribulation or adversity, he must be patient under his affliction, and think it is the will of God. Also if any person inflicts an injury upon him, he must not avenge himself, but leave vengeance unto God, and consider that without permission of God no man can hurt a hair of his head. As David said when Shimei cursed

and threw stones at him, Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and requite me good for his cursing this day. 2 Sam. 16. Thus a man must submit in all things, and live according to the pleasure of God, in temporals or spirituals, in good report or evil report, in sickness or health, in prosperity or adversity, in riches or poverty, in strength or infirmity, in life or death; as is the pleasure of our God, so should we always answer, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

But this no man can do unless he is a child of God, in whose heart and conversation the name of God is hallowed, who desires his will and kingdom, and, having experienced how gracious the Lord is, lives no longer unto himself, but unto him that died for him and rose again. 2 Cor. 5: 15. And who also, living under the control and protection of the Almighty, needs no longer a sheriff or a constable, but commits all things unto him who judgeth righteously, and lets his will be done.

5. Give us this day our daily bread.

Not only this earthly bread for our earthly body, but the heavenly bread and the hidden manna for our souls; as Christ says, Labor not for the meat, which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting

life, which the Son of man shall give unto you : for him hath God the Father sealed. John 6 : 27.

Now, how can a man pray for this bread or daily meat that endureth unto eternal life, if he has never hungered aright after this meat, or after the word of life? For a man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. 4 : 4. Yea, so long as a man does not hunger after every word of God to satisfy his soul therewith, he cannot beseech God in sincerity for this food of the soul. For a child of God, that knows the goodness and benevolence of his Father, hungers and thirsts constantly after this, that he may do his will ; as Christ says, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. John 4 : 34. So, also, a child of God, as long as he lives in the flesh, desires his daily nourishment out of the living word, which, being ingrafted in him, is able to save his soul (James 1 : 21) ; for this is the real food of the soul, that she do the will of her Father who is in heaven.

6. And forgive us our debts.

How can a man pray to God to forgive him his debts, when he will not acknowledge his debt before God, but commits sin daily in the pleasure and delight of this world, and if not gross acts, yet he transgresses the commandments of God by his own traditions, (Matt.

15 : 3,) heaping up debt upon debt; and yet he will pray *Forgive me my debts*, which is nothing less than solemn mockery.

But a child of God, who is dead unto sin and lives unto God in Christ, (Rom. 6. Col. 3,) does not only pray that God may forgive him the sinful infirmities and weakness of the flesh, but he denies them, and mortifies the impure members that are on the earth (Col. 3,) he avoids sin as a deadly serpent, abstains from every appearance of evil, (1 Thess. 5 : 22,) and has no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; (Eph. 5 : 11,) and yet he confesses the weakness and daily infirmities of the flesh in which there dwelleth no good thing. Rom. 7. Therefore his constant prayer is, that God will of his grace forgive him his debts, for he has nothing to pay; his works are not sufficient; his performance is too imbecile, and his ability too inconsiderable to fulfil his righteousness; therefore he prostrates himself at the throne of grace and prays, *Forgive me mine or our*, that is, all christians' debts.

7. *As we* (as being christians) *forgive our debtors*.

For a child of God is at all times willing to forgive his brethren in Christ the faults committed against him, even as Christ also forgave him, (Col. 3 : 13); and not only his brethren but all men, even his enemies who mock, revile and calumniate him and do all

manner of evil against him; as is shown above in the second and third divisions.

But how can those, who live in strife and contention, returning railing for railing, quarreling and going to law with their neighbors, repelling force by force, pray, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and thereby think to obtain grace and forgiveness from God? For if God would do unto them as they do to their debtors, he would deliver them to the jailer, and the jailer would cast them into the prison of hell, as Christ says in the parable. Matt. 5 and 18. Therefore all contentious men utter this prayer to their own condemnation.

8. And lead us not into temptation.

Or as other versions have it, suffer us not to be led into temptation.

Now how can a man pray that he may not be led into temptation when he daily exposes himself to the danger of sin, and lives according to the will of the sinful flesh? And though Christ by his grace frequently calls and convinces him, yet he will not have him to reign over him; therefore his prayer is rejectable, and is pure hypocrisy before God.

But a child of God, in whose heart the spirit of Christ cries Abba Father! desires to hallow the name of God in all his walk, prays that his kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and longs after the daily bread or word of God by

which his soul may be strengthened in good things, and grow up in the purity of faith to the perfect stature of godliness, in which he desires to purify himself as God is pure, that at last he may be like him and see him as he is. 1 John 3. Hence he prays that God himself may carry on the purification within him, and forgive him all his debts and failings, as he forgives his debtors; and prays further, that he may not be led into temptation, for he fears, abstains from and avoids sin; and depends, not upon himself, but upon God, who is his protection in temptation, and his refuge in every time of need. Therefore he says,

9. *But deliver us from evil,*

With which I and my brethren are encompassed, being daily exposed to the buffeting and temptation of sin. For thine is the kingdom which thou hast founded and set up in the souls of all thy children by thy power; for thou art the power in us, and all our ability is centered in thee. Thou art also the glory in us, and the more thou art glorified in us, the more glory we will have in thee, not only in time but in eternity, to the praise of thy glorious Majesty, world without end. Amen.

Learn, dear reader, from this, and take a view of thyself in this mirror; repent and be converted, let thy heart be circumcised with the circumcision done without hands, that

thou mayest be a disciple or scholar of Jêsus, and through him mayest arrive at a knowledge of the Father; for no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Matt. 11: 27. And O glorious revelation which Christ imparts to longing souls. O then the pilgrim sees and tastes how gracious the Lord is. Then he can say with all saints, Our Father, &c., for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

1. O Father kind ! thou lov'st thy child,
Who's truly born of thee ;
Thou cleanseest him from sin and guile,
And set'st his spirit free.
2. By Christ, thy dear beloved Son,
Thou dost our hearts prepare,
Whom thou didst send from heaven's throne,
To suffer pain and care.
3. For sin and the misdeeds of man,
Which bind us as a chain,
That we conforming with thy plan,
May unto God attain.
4. Therefore, O Father, in us grant,
Thy name may hallowed be ;
Give us the light and oil we want,
Our way on earth to see.
5. Thy kingdom come, O God above,
To all who've turned from sin,
Where nothing rules but peace and love,
O'er those who walk therein.
6. Thy will should every christian bind ;
Our own we should not take ;
For having gained a heavenly mind,
Our will we should forsake.

7. Give us our daily bread, O Lord,
That we may be supplied
From out thy true and living word,
While we on earth abide.
8. Our debts, O Father, do forgive,
Which in our souls we find;
O cleanse our sins that we may live,
In Jesus' favor kind.
9. As we have also these forgiven
Who trespasses have done,
As we received commandment, even
From Jesus Christ thy Son.
10. Therefore, O God, do us preserve
From all that tempt us may,
That from thy path we ne'er may swerve,
While here on earth we stay.
11. Redeem us from all sin and guile,
Which keep us still in pain,
That we, O God, may like thy Child,
From every sin abstain.
12. For thine's the kingdom and the power,
Thy impulse all things sways.
Whatever blessings on us shower,
Must still enhance thy praise.
13. We'll then submit, while here in time,
To God, nor think it long,
That we may there in heaven's clime
Shout forth the victor's song.

Amen.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

Embraces a portion from the 16th verse to the end of the Chapter. 1. That a man should in all his actions have regard to the honor of God. 2. That a man should not lay up treasure on earth, but in heaven. 3. What the single eye is, and that men should cut off the offending members. 4. Of heathenish cares, and that men should use the world and not abuse it.

I.

O ye beloved children of God, dispersed abroad in a wicked and sinful world, to you especially and particularly is my sincere counsel, that ye look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. Behold, what an example he has left us, that we should follow his steps (1 Pet. 2: 21); what instructions has he given us from his Father's mouth, which we should reflect upon and make the rule of our life. What grace has he not displayed in this that we for his sake should be justified, if we follow him in the spirit of obedience: what a sincere intercession has he not made for his own, that they might be kept from evil (John 17); what anxiety did he not manifest for us, lest we should be seduced from the path of rectitude. Therefore he has incessantly warned us and put us upon our guard, that we should preserve with fidelity what he has committed to our care.

Mark 94 to 37. Nay, his entire sermon and the whole of his doctrine contained in the four Evangelists, concur in this point; from which we should learn to depend entirely and exclusively upon him. Therefore, humility of spirit is the first grade of which we must be made partakers, before we can have any part with Christ, as is shown in the first division. If now this humility of spirit abides in us as the ground work, that is, if we think, do, or permit nothing of ourselves, but bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, (2 Cor. 10: 5,) we shall attain through him to a state of perfection in God, that God may be to his children all in all.

Therefore it behooves us at all times to watch, and together with our watching to examine, whether we remain steadfast in the way we set out; whether all we do, we do to the honor of God, through love in God and to God. This then comprehends our almsgiving, our praying, our fasting, and our whole worship in all its parts and branches: so that if we do these things from habit, or as an obtrusive duty, or to conciliate the favor of some person, we have our reward. Or if we claim of God some privilege by virtue of which we shall be made happy, our righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees. Therefore Christ has faithfully warned us to take heed

in all these things, that we do nothing before men to receive honor of them, but in humility and retiredness of heart, as in the presence of God. For grace consists in this, that we do all out of love to God and his honor, through Jesus Christ, for the Father will be honored in the Son. John 5: 23.

II.

Therefore Christ proceeds to give us another warning, that we shall not lay up treasure on earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; for these earthly treasures are extremely perishable. How soon must we leave them and transfer them to others; or even if we should remain here a long time, thieves may break in and strip us of all; which will occasion us great trouble and sorrow, if our heart is in them. And this sorrow, says Paul, worketh death. 2 Cor. 7: 10. But if our heart is free so that we can use them as the gifts of the Lord, and employ them for the advancement of his honor, we can say with Job, The Lord gave, and he has power to take away, or permit to be taken away.

Yea, what are all earthly treasures, that we should be delighted therewith? What would it profit us to gain the whole world and lose our own soul? Or with what willingness should not a man give the whole world to redeem his soul? Therefore let

every one watch and be upon his guard ; for they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows, (what a sad consequence!) Therefore Paul calls upon all the children of God to beware of the things of time and sense, and seek, in earnest haste, the everlasting riches. But thou, O man of God ! flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 1 Timothy 6. These are the treasures which we should lay up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where our treasure is, there is also our heart and our love, our desires, our joy and delight ; thither the eye of our mind is constantly directed, and if the eye is single the whole body is full of light.

III.

Mark: Single is not complex, is not double-hearted, is not with one eye in the world, to seek pleasure in things on earth, and with the other in heaven. For a man cannot serve two masters: we must love one and hate the other; the offending member, eye,

hand and foot, must be absconded: that is, our carnal propensities, which incline us to walk in the ways of the world, must be mortified and extirpated, (Col. 3) that we may look only with the internal spiritual eye of the mind up to where Christ sitteth on the right hand of the majesty of God. This is to have, with a single eye, our conversation in heaven; hence the whole body is light; but if this eye is evil and unfaithful towards God, paying more respect to things on the earth than things in heaven, and having more regard for the creature than the creator, the whole body is full of darkness; (and mark) if the light that is in us is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Here apply these words of Christ, When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then saith he, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished, (without vigilance and spiritual labor, in a lukewarm and careless condition, as if no danger was apprehended.) Then goeth he, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Matt. 12.

Therefore it is written, Be vigilant; be-

cause your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith. 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9. Wherefore Christ says, Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. Mark 13.

O here is great danger! Who may escape? For the world may be compared to an intriguing harlot; she presents herself arrayed in pomp and magnificence, and with seductive arts inflames our sinful desires and exerts an attractive influence upon our affections; if a person is not vigilant, but permits his thoughts to incline towards this harlot, the Philistines or unclean spirits wait without, contriving how they may deprive us of our spiritual eyesight, and finally put an end to our life of godliness; and in this manner the world may become the instrument, by which we again fall under the power of the devil and all unclean spirits, being constrained to make sport of their exultation, as Sampson did among the Philistines. Judges 16. But in this case a person must do like Joseph, the man of integrity, rather leave the coat and all temporal honor and enjoyment with the intriguing world,

and fly with him under the cross ; and God will in the end exalt us over all the treasures of Egypt. Gen. 39 and 41.

Hence I counsel with Paul all who are risen with Christ, that they seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Yea, set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. 3: 1, 2. For godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Therefore godliness with contentment is great gain ; for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain, we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. 1 Tim. 6.

We cannot serve two masters, says Christ, we must either love the one, and hate the other, or cleave to the one and despise the other ; we cannot serve God and mammon ; that is, we cannot at the same time have our heart and delight in the world, and also in God ; but we must forsake houses, brethren, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, and lands, for Christ's name's sake ; and whosoever does this, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Matt. 19: 20. Mark 10.

The meaning here is, not that a person is debarred the possession of lands, or the use of the world, but that he shall keep his heart detached from and unoppressed with the cares.

of this life, not trusting in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. 1 Tim. 6: 17. And further, the meaning, as Paul says, is, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. 1 Cor. 7.

And inasmuch as the fashion of this world passes away, and we cannot retain it forever, we should necessarily preserve our affections detached from it, and rather suffer the loss of everything, if it should be so, for Christ's sake, than be separated from him, or act counter to his blessed doctrine. Therefore, the Hebrews took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Heb. 10: 34.

IV.

Wherefore Christ also says, Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns;

yet your heavenly father feedeth them. Are you not much better than they?

This is the rich consolation and glorious promise given by Christ to those who believe on him, and live in obedience to the injunction contained in these words, If any man sueth thee at the law and taketh away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again; (Luke 6: 30,) as was shown before in the third division.

But how many objections and subterfuges are made by unbelievers and the children of the world: they turn from side to side; one has married a wife, and therefore he cannot do as he would wish; another has purchased a plantation, therefore he excuses himself; another again has a house to build, and is engaged in this; another has money to collect and must still make use of force, or he might lose a little something; the mechanic is afraid he may lose his customers; and the man of pleasure thinks, How can I abandon my pleasant and delightful life? I would be ridiculed as a fool and a simpleton, and would lose all my glory and fame in the world.

And again, there is not so much danger to be apprehended as this or that person imagines; God is merciful and of great patience.

And further, I look around, and see my neighbors and friends who are religiously in-

clined, living no better than myself, and some even not as good, who, notwithstanding, indulge the hope, that they shall enjoy eternal felicity. Therefore I will wait a while, to taste with them the pleasure of the world, and when I am old or in sickness, become weak and infirm, I will turn in earnest unto God, and cry heartily for grace, and he will be merciful to me.

O sinner, lulled in the lap of security, dost thou suffer thy eyes to be thus blinded by the devil and his children, till they have dragged thy soul to hell, where thou wilt first find what thy subterfuges and the cares of life have brought upon thee. For dost thou not know that the day may overtake thee in such condition as a thief, and come upon thee as a snare and as travail upon a woman with child, so that thou shalt not escape? Matt. 24: 43. Luke 21: 35, 36. 1 Thess. 5: 2. 2 Pet. 3: 10. Rev. 3: 3 and 16: 15. Yea, sinner, when the day overtaketh thee even at the time when thou art least expecting it, what will be the state of thy mind! If God has now marked thee out as an example of his vengeance, and directed against thee the arrows of death, to be revenged upon thee for thy sins, when he takes in his almighty hand the sword long since whet to wrath, in order to fight against thee; where wilt thou fly for refuge? If God is against thee, who may be for thee?

Can thy friends then afford thee relief whom thou lovedst more than God? Ah no! they may weep and lament over thy departure, they may extend the hand and bid thee the last solemn adieu, they can do no more! They can afford thee no consolation, they are unable to assuage the pangs of thy guilty conscience, or to do anything for thy poor and agonizing soul! Now what alternative? Thou must now forsake thy wife, land, house, goods, trade, the joy of the world and the company of thy friends. Behold, sleeper, thou canst now learn to see thy folly, and thy unhallowed conscience will, perhaps before thou takest thy departure, perceive the fire of the wrath of the Almighty which constrains thee in thy trouble, distress and anguish, to cry aloud to God; who says he will not hear. Now wilt thou seek him early, but he will not be found of thee. Why? Because thou rejectedst his doctrine and didst not regard the terror of the Lord, but settest at nought all his counsel and wouldst none of his reproof, (that is the chastening grace,) that taught thee to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, (Tit. 2: 11, 12,) which thou didst not do. Therefore shalt thou eat of the fruit of thy own way, and be filled with thy own devices; for the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy

them. But whose hearteneth unto God shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. Proverbs, 1st chapter.

Therefore, O man, be not so unbelieving, be not detained too long by thy heathenish cares, seeing thou canst not by taking thought, as Christ says, add one cubit to thy stature: And (since thou canst do nothing without God) why takest thou thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Now, my dear man, thou who boastest thyself a christian, examine whether thou art a christian, or a Gentile who knows not God. For if thou seekest the things of the world more than the things of heaven, and livest more according to the will of the flesh than the will of God, thou art a Gentile rather than a christian: if thou bringest in as a subterfuge thy wife and children, house

or lands, friends and relations, thy trade or profession, and the like, thou art a Gentile rather than a christian; and if thou art not disposed, from thy heart, to lose house, land, husband, wife, children, brothers, sisters, friends, neighbors, and all thou hast, before thou wouldst wilfully transgress one of the commandments of Christ, thou art a Gentile rather than a christian. For Christ says, Whosoever forsaketh not all he has cannot be my disciple.

But the unbelieving formalist, or nominal christian replies, If I was to live thus and make such a confession as is set forth in the illustration of this sermon, I would soon be robbed by everybody, and could not possibly get through the world with my family.

Behold, reader, this is the language of the accursed unbelief which bewitches almost the whole world, keeping them back from Christ and thereby derogating from the omnipotent majesty of God, as if he was not mighty to provide for his own, who confide in him with all their heart. Moreover the doctrine of Christ is rejected, in which he constantly enjoins upon us to keep ourselves free from the cares of the gentiles, and place our trust in God who provides for us in all things and will provide; the truth of which he has evidenced in those who have placed their whole reliance in him. Noah he knew how to preserve in the flood, Abraham in a

land where he had no possession, not so much as to set his foot upon, Lot in Sodom, Israel in the wilderness, Elijah by a raven, the widow in the time of famine, the three children in the furnace, Daniel in the lion's den, Susanna from the false judges, the apostles from imprisonment, John in the isle of Patmos, (Gen. 8 and 12. Acts 7: 5. Gen. 19. Dan. 3 and 6. 1 Kings 17. Story of Susanna 1. Acts 5. Rev. 1: 9,) and many similar examples. For his hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. If he is for us, who can be against us. Is. 59: 1. Rom. 8: 31. For he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High and abideth under the shadow of the Almighty, saith of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Ps. 91. He casteth all his care upon him, knowing that he careth for him. 1 Pet. 5: 7.

These are the attributes of genuine faith; hence Paul says, Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. 11: 6. And the prophet says, O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Jer. 5: 3. And Christ says, Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things; seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be

added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow : for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Perhaps some one will say, A man cannot be without care; for he must build, plant, sow, reap, and provide for his family, as Paul shows us in these words, If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 1 Tim. 5 : 8.

This is granted; it is a duty incumbent upon us to do all this, as long as it shall please God; for in the sweat of our brow we should eat our bread and should work with our hands, so as not to be chargeable to any; and Paul commanded if any would not work, neither should he eat. 2 Thess. 3 : 10.

But all this can be done without having our hearts surcharged with cares; for if we build, we should not be solicitous how we shall complete our design; because we know not whether we shall live till morning; and if we sow, we should not be anxious how it may thrive and produce, but should commit it entirely to God; in harvest we should gather in the grain as though we were never to taste it; when at our daily work we should think, perhaps to-day or to-night my Master will come and demand an account of my stewardship; and if we proceed daily upon this plan, the cares of the world will certainly

diminish; for we have here an important work to attend to, where every day will bring forth its own evil. Therefore all temporal cares are extremely pernicious to the soul; they are shackles by which it is bound on earth and kept from heaven; and wo to such a soul; for the devil (who is by Christ cast out of many heavenly and sanctified hearts) is come down to her in her earthly habitation, having great wrath, because he knoweth he has but a short time (Rev. 12); for his judgment is near at hand. But on the other hand, all the heavenborn and sanctified Spirits who have their conversation according to the inner man no more on earth but in heaven, yea, who are the new heaven and the new earth, the dwelling of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, for whom the angels as ministering Spirits and flaming fires, minister as unto heirs of salvation, (Heb. 1: 14,) to them the voice of the Spirit says, Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell therein, for now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, (Rev. 12,) and he will reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Hence, soul, to heaven direct thy eyes,
Let nought on earth thee bind;
With thy whole heart to God arise,
Thou shalt redemption find.
Then thou wilt first correct observe,
What God is in his own;
For his bright angels do them serve,
His light's around them thrown.
No harm can reach them from their foes,

God's for them in the strife,
Calm in his bosom they repose,
In times with sufferings rife.
This is the yoke gives little pain,
Which Christ's true members bear;
In tribulation they obtain
Of comfort, glorious share.
Hence do your cares incessant cast
Upon the Lord's control,
Who cares for beasts and blades of grass,
For body more and soul.
Ah children, let us onward move,
Until we shall procure
From God who reigns in realms above,
The crown of brightness pure.
O then vexation into joy
Is changed in our breast;
So that pure bliss without alloy
We do in Christ possess.
Hosanna to the Lamb of God!
Didst not for us obtain
This peace upon the cursed wood,
We'd suffer endless pain. Amen.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

Embraces a part of the seventh chapter, from the first to the 7th verse, namely, one man should not judge another by his own reason or wisdom, but should commit all judgment to the Spirit of God, by whom the children of God shall judge the world.

In the first place, ye beloved children of the most high God, ye who have this evangelical doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ more by experience than by knowledge, ye who have passed through the school of self-denial: see that you walk circumspectly and sally not forth from your strong hold, but remain within in Christ your shepherd and leader, and follow his voice, that he may work all things by you; may by you teach and instruct, contend against the world, and exercise mercy, so that he may be all in you, and you may not live unto yourselves but unto him; you will then be able to say with Christ (since you are one with him. John 17.) I can of my own self do nothing; as I hear I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. John 5. Beloved children proceed by this rule, do nothing of yourselves, but let him

that is in you, do all by you; and so you shall with him judge the world, and not only the world, but angels, and shall rule the nations with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces. Rev. 2: 26, 27.

In the second place, ye carnal minded men, ye who by your reason and philosophic wisdom, or false and self-righteousness, judge others concerning the mote in their eye, having at the same time a beam in your own eyes, that is, ye are yet unconverted, uncircumcised in heart, yet carnal and unregenerated; hence you call evil good, and good evil; darkness light, and light darkness; ye judge others and condemn yourselves. Therefore, O ye men, who act on this wise, how do ye think to escape the judgment of God? Know you not that the long suffering and goodness of God leadeth (first) to repentance, (Rom. 2,) or will lead, so that you may judge, not as carnal, but as spiritual; for it must be spiritually discerned; he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 1 Cor. 2: 14, 15. Mark, he judgeth all things, not of himself, but by the spirit, according to the mind of Christ, or according to his word and doctrine in which is contained the mind of Christ; for his word which he has spoken shall judge men at the last day; not himself nor his saints, but his spoken word which man transgresses, being disobedient to the gospel of Jesus Christ,

against whom sentence is already pronounced, that it may finally be accomplished (in all those who in their life time resisted through disobedience,) by Christ, who has announced beforehand, that every man should turn and repent. Therefore all will have to confess, we have condemned ourselves through our hardness and impenitent hearts; we have treasured up unto ourselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who now renders unto every man according to his works. Rom. 2: 5, 6. But when Christ pronounced the dreadful wo upon the scribes and pharisees, and all false prophets, he did not do it as judging them, but as announcing the judgment and final doom which would infallibly result to them from their obstinacy; to the end that they might be excited to repentance. Likewise, when Paul pronounced a curse against all who would preach a gospel different from his, he did not do it as judging any man, but for a warning to all, well knowing that whosoever teaches otherwise than he taught, is accursed. In like manner all similar expressions uttered by the apostles, were intended to serve purely as warnings, that every man should be afraid and humble himself under the mighty hand of God, so as to be exalted at his proper time.

On the other hand, if a man lives a carnal and impenitent life, he is judged already by

the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. If he does not walk agreeably to the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, he is judged by the same doctrine; if he preaches any other doctrine, he is accursed by the same doctrine. John 3: 18. Rom. 1: 29 to 32. Chap. 8. Gal. 1. 2 John, verse 9.

From this it is easy to infer first that the saints judge no man, but that the Lord's word judgeth. As Christ says, Judge not that ye be not judged; (and Luke 6,) condemn not that ye be not condemned, &c.

Again, it is evident, notwithstanding, that they who are spiritual judge all things, not of themselves, but by the word of the Lord; and they are judged of no man, for they are judged agreeable to the same word by the Spirit of Christ who guideth them into all truth, (John 16: 13, 14); and the same Spirit through their instrumentality reproveth the world of sin. John 16: 8.

But since the natural man does not know this Spirit, he cannot bear the reproof of the children of God, (though they reprove him out of pure love for his amelioration) but is exasperated against them, as the Jews were against Christ and his apostles. The foundation of this is, that the person does not know himself; he is spiritually blind, his own righteousness has obscured his vision, he will not be persuaded that his soul is thus circum-

stanced, or that his condition is so forlorn as is represented by him who is righteous; therefore he is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other men's, his ways are of another fashion. Wisdom 2: 12 to 17.

This was the disposition of the hardened Jews, when they persecuted Christ and the apostles with their brethren; this was the disposition of the unbelieving gentiles and all the persecutors from the beginning of the world; as Christ says, They will cast you out of their synagogues and slay you, and will think they do God service, but all this they will do unto you because they neither know me nor my Father. John 16. Therefore, O man, learn first to know thyself; let the beam be extracted from thy own eye before thou undertakest to pull the mote out of thy brother's eye; but when the eye is cleansed, when thy heart is turned from the power of satan to God, when thou hast received forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in God, (Acts 26: 18,) then see that thou take the mote out of thy brother's eye; reprove, rebuke, exhort, in season or out of season, with all long suffering and doctrine; for the time is now come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and turn away

their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. 2 Tim. 4.

O christendom, how hast thou become so like the hardened Jews! You boast of being christians as they did of being Abraham's children; but the doctrine of Christ has no place among you, you do not understand his speech, and therefore cannot hear his word. John 8: 37, 43. If a person represents this to you, rebuking you for your disobedience, and by the doctrine of Christ rejects your self chosen will-worship, reproving with the scripture your impenitent lives, you cannot bear this, you cry out, This fellow is a mover of sedition and a sectary, he preaches a new doctrine which is every where spoken against, (Acts 21: 21, and 24: 5, and 28: 22); he judges and condemns all things, he is self-righteous and thinks himself better than other people, (though it is not true before God). But as regards you (who judge according to your carnal judgment) it is true, that is, you believe as you say, since reason by the suggestion of satan teaches you so; as the Jews thought they were justifiable in saying, Christ had a devil, so you think you are justifiable in saying, the disciples and members of Christ are sectaries and movers of sedition, who are incited by the spirit of the devil to disturb the peace of the world. Which expressions have often been made in regard to myself, and it is no wonder; for if they have called the

master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household. Matt. 10 : 25. For this reason I will not cease to speak in light, what he tells me in darkness, and what he whispers in my ear, that I will preach upon the housetops ; that is in public, not fearing them who may kill the body, but rather him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matt. 10 : 27, 28. Peter and John (in the midst of all the threatenings) could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard. Acts 4 : 20.

O ye hardened men, who often speak evil of the things that you do not understand, and shall therefore utterly perish in your own corruption, (2 Pet. 2 : 12,) repent, repent and reform ; sell all you have and follow the crossbearing Jesus ; become poor in yourselves and full of godly sorrow ; cast away your own righteousness, and seek that which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ; and so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into his everlasting kingdom ; you shall be made partakers of the divine disposition and nature of Christ, set in his image after the inner man ; ye shall be the pure salt of the earth, and the true light of the world ; ye shall reprove the world by the Spirit of God ; ye shall mete with the true measure and judge according to the word of God ; your sentence (as far as the fruit is manifest to you) will agree with the sentence

of God, so that whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Matt. 5: 3, 4, 20. 2 Pet¹: 11, 4. Col. 3: 10. Matt. 5: 13, 14. John 16: 8. Matt. 18: 8 and 10, 20.

And now, ye christians, who have found this pearl of great price and obtained these holy things, take heed that you use them in a proper manner, according to the counsel of Christ, and not give them to the dogs, or cast them before swine; that is, such men as, having once ejected their sins, like the dog, swallow them again, or like the sow, having been washed, return again to their wallowing in the mire of their sins, (2 Pet. 2: 22,) lest they trample them under foot and turn again and rend you. Matt. 7: 6.

As Paul says to Timothy, Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying, That the resurrection is passed already, and overthrow the faith of many. 2. Tim. 2.

In this we observe how these backsliding members, who are compared to dogs and

swine, have turned again; how their words have rent and contaminated some, overthrowing their faith. Therefore Christ warns us not to give our holy things unto such, nor to have any fellowship with them; as Paul says, A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. Tit. 3: 10, 11.

From this we learn that it is incumbent upon us not to engage in much disputation with those who were called brethren in Christ, and concerning the truth do err and turn to evil, but to admonish them a first and second time in sincerity to reform, and if they will not then hear us, to avoid them, lest they corrupt us. 2 Tim. 4: 14, 15. For a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 1 Cor. 5: 6. Gal. 5: 9.

From this we learn in addition, that we should not give the holy things and the precious pearls of the gospel to impenitent and unconverted sinners, who yet in their old beastly practices wallow in sins like swine, in order to console and speak peace to them, nor should we administer them the communion, as though they were brethren in Christ; for such are ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude, verse 4); if not by their mouth, they do it in their works, (Tit. 1: 16,) and in such

manner they trample upon holy things. Therefore we should much more rebuke, reprove, and preach up strict righteousness, that thereby, terror seizing upon them, they may reform and become heirs of eternal salvation.

1. O Jesus, Shepherd of our race!
Grant us thy goodness and thy grace,
Within us by thy Spirit cause,
What self in thee, O Jesus, was.
2. That we may always go through thee
Unto the Father, always see
The dangers that o'er us impend,
Unless thou, Jesus, art our friend.
3. Teach us, thy word and spirit by,
What's false to know, all things to try,
That we may judge them by thy word,
As thou hast taught us, gracious Lord.
4. Thy word is a criterion clear,
Which thou hast given us mortals here.
Whereby to form a judgment true,
Since we are judged in what we do.
5. Who diff'rent judge, damnation find,
Their judgment not being pure divine,
And hence with thee it may not stand,
Since 'twas not done by thy command.
6. We must the beam take from our eye,
Before thou wilt that we should try
The mote from others' eyes to clear;
Therefore, O man, be careful here,
7. Lest when thou judgest other men,
Thou dost thyself by this condemn;
For if thyself art yet impure,
Thou dost God's judgment strong endure.
8. Therefore, O man, thy heart review;
It is no jest, 'tis solemn true;
Thou must beforehand hallowed be,
And in pure peace with God agree.

9. Then God himself will judgment take
Through Jesus Christ : for Jesus' sake
All that against thee now remain,
They cast into eternal pain.
10. If thou hast this rich treasure drawn,
O held it as thy dearest pawn,
And cast it not to dogs to eat,
Lest they may tread it under feet.
11. O Jesus, Shepherd of our race,
Grant us thy goodness and thy grace,
By Spirit blest in us provide,
What by the law was ne'er supplied.

So grant us, Lord Jesus, thy Holy Spirit, who may lead us into all thy truth, and teach us the mysteries of thy kingdom, by which we shall be enabled to distinguish true from false, pure from impure, internal, as regards thee, from what is external, that we may not live out of thee, but in thee, and thou alone mayest work all things in us and by us, according to thy word and will ; for thy word is perfect truth, thy commandment is everlasting life, and this thy word will judge all men at the last day. Therefore, O Jesus, thou who art worthy of all worship, bring forth thy judgment in us unto victory, that we may pass from death unto life, and not come into judgment. Make all thy enemies in us thy footstool, that we may live in thee, O Jesus, and thou in us, as thou abidest in the Father and the Father in thee, to the honor and praise of thy glorious majesty, now and for evermore. Amen.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

Embraces a portion from the 7th to the 15th verse: 1. It is shown how necessary the knowledge of ourselves is, if we would come to Christ: 2. That prayer is the means by which hungry souls draw nigh to Christ. 3. After the mystical death a man springs to life and becomes a new creature. 4. The life and increase of the new man consists in the spirit and gospel of Jesus Christ. 5. The reason why few are saved is, that the gate is strait and the way narrow. 6. A representation of the great dangers a man is exposed to of being misled in regard to the reality of his conversion.

I.

Benign reader, if having read this discourse thus far, thou hast not yet experienced the power of God which lies concealed in the gospel, thou wilt perhaps exclaim with the disciples, Who can be saved? Or who can live in the strictness required by the scriptures? These, perhaps, and other similar ideas, will suggest themselves. If so, remember,

1. That the scripture cannot be broken, as Christ teaches us. John 10: 35.

2. That strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matt. 7: 14.

3. That not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matt. 7: 21.

4. That the will of the Father is manifested and declared unto us by Jesus Christ. John 12: 49, 50 and 14: 10.

5. That he who saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2: 4, 5, 6.

6. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 2 John, verse 9.

7. That the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God. Luke 18: 27.

Now, reader, when thou considerest these and many other passages of scripture, in which God has pronounced irrevocable sentence of condemnation upon all those that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Thess. 1: 8, 9,) what will be thy excuse, and what thy consolation, so long as thou hast no interest in the gospel? For lo! the threatening is nothing less than death and everlasting perdition.

Therefore be sober this once; awake from thy sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light (Eph. 5: 14); for he is

the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, (John 1: 9,) and he that followeth this light, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8: 12. Is. 9: 2. And this life will grow up in us through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, in his doctrine, to a perfect man, that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Eph. 4: 13, 14.

But before we attain to this new condition, this life of godliness, we must see by the light of Jesus that our natural and historical knowledge of Christ is but darkness, that our intelligence is no intelligence, and our understanding no understanding, as regards things divine; yea, that our wisdom is but foolishness with God; as Paul teaches us, saying, Let no man deceive himself; If any among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise; for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. 1 Cor. 3: 18, 19. Christ also thanked his Father because he hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Matt. 11: 25.

This renunciation of ourselves and our own knowledge and wisdom gives rise to

humility of spirit and godly sorrow, the true state of infancy in which is laid open the way to grace by the drawing of the father, through an earnest seeking and longing, inflamed with the spirit of prayer, so that the penitent sighs incessantly, and ceases not till he is made partaker of grace. For by the knowledge of his poor and wretched condition he is incited to prayer, and is encouraged by the promises of God in Christ Jesus not to leave off till he finds consolation in his Savior, whom he does not yet see, but approaches him in weak faith, surrounded with a multitude of temptations, and under a sense of his unworthiness he sobs forth, Be merciful unto me a sinner. O wretched man that I am, whither shall I go; where shall I find refuge, if thou, O Shepherd of Israel, dost not receive me as a sheep of thy pasture, as an example of thy mercy, of which, when I look into myself, I find I am unworthy. I have rendered myself obnoxious to the penalty of offended justice. I am worthy of undergoing thy eternal condemnation for the multitude of my sins.

Behold! this is the condition of the man of a contrite spirit, of them that tremble at the word of the Lord, and unto whom he will look. Is. 66: 2. Unto these Christ calleth, saying, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that

asketh, receiveth ; and he that seeketh, findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? Matt. 7. Luke 11.

II.

Go then, oppressed sinner, and lay hold of Christ by his word, and humbly beg for this proffered grace, and thou shalt obtain it at his time according to his promise. If he does not come to thy relief as soon as thou desirest, be not dejected, (for it does not become us to set time or season to the Lord) but pray the more earnestly, bow down thyself in the dust at his feet, and be submissive in greater humility, and he will assuredly hear thee and fulfil his promise.

The tempter will, no doubt, raise objections, and tell thee thou hast often rejected grace when thou shouldst have complied with the terms of salvation ; he has often called and thou didst not answer, hath knocked and thou didst not open ; he would oft have taken thee under the wings of his mercy, as a hen gathereth her chickens, and thou

wouldst not; he tendered thee his grace but thou wouldst not have him to reign over thee: but now in the time of thy need, when thy soul is full of troubles, and thy life draweth nigh unto the grave, (Ps. 88,) he has hidden his face from thee; now thou callest, but he will not answer; thou seekest him but he will not be found of thee: now thou art left to eat the fruit of thy own way, and to be filled with thy own devices. Prov. 1: 31. These and numerous other objections of a similar nature, are almost sufficient to overwhelm thy slender bark; this storm of temptation drives over thee the terrific billows of desperation; the anguish of death cometh upon thee, and the horror of hell encompasseth thee round about, so that thou criest aloud with David, My iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. Ps. 38. O wretched penitent, this is the time of purification by which the Lord prepares thee for a better condition; this is the time and the power of darkness which thy Saviour also experienced, particularly when about to suffer the ignominious death of the cross for thee and all unhappy sinners, at which time, under intense agony, he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, that he might assist and comfort thee in all thy temptations. Therefore faint not, wait upon the Lord, and he will renew thy strength: cast thyself, thy old and sinful hu-

manity, upon the justice of God: let it, as an executioner, fasten thee with Christ to the cross and slay the old man, and so thou shalt be furnished in paradise with the new or inner man, through the innocence of Christ.

But if thou canst not understand this, take for example the prodigal son. Having spent all the goods he received from his father with harlots and riotous living; having nothing more to spend, and being in the last extremity, he arose and went to his father, though on the way no doubt he was perplexed with many fears and apprehensions, lest his father would not receive him, but rather accuse him of being an undutiful son, who had squandered his goods in disgraceful riotings, and on that account would drive him away as a person unworthy of being received into his house. Necessity alone compelled him; he saw that, unless he went, he must perish with hunger; he knew that he had no way of preserving his life, unless his father (about whom he thought very little in his prosperity) would show him compassion; for he knew that his father had bread in abundance to fill his hungry soul. Thus impelled by necessity, he arose and departed, but in what manner? Not that he might justify himself before his father, or palliate his wicked course of life: no, he presented

himself as he was, poor and lost, guilty and unjust: full of repentance for his dissolute and prodigal life, he cried out with a submissive heart, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But his father, who saw him afar off, came to meet him, and filled with ardent love and paternal joy, fell on his neck and kissed him. Not a word dropped from the father reprehensive of his past life. Ah no, the joy for his child, once lost and now found, was too exquisite; they took off his tattered garments and put on the best robe; a ring is put on his hand and shoes on his feet; they prepare a feast, eat, drink and are merry; the whole family hear the father in gladness exclaim, This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. Luke 15.

Hungering and distressed soul, pause here a moment, and reflect whether thou canst not perceive in the above that thou thyself art the lost son, who, by thy sins and iniquities, hast separated between thee and thy God, (Isaiah 59: 2,) and now in humility of spirit and extremity of want, hungerest after grace: Assuredly thou art the lost son; arise in thy poverty and go to thy Father; he has bread in abundance; he looks to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembles at his word (Is. 66: 2); he will give thee beauty

for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Is. 61: 3.

Incline thy ear to him and hear, and thy soul shall live; for he will make an everlasting covenant with thee, even the sure mercies of David. Is. 55: 3.

A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. Matt. 12: 20.

He will take away thy filthy garments, and cause thy iniquity to pass from thee; he will clothe thee with the garments of salvation; he will cover thee with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Is. 61: 10. Zach. 3: 4, 5.

He will bring thee to his rich entertainment, (Luke 14: 21, 23,) and fill thy soul with good things (Is. 55: 2); he will announce to his servants and ministering spirits the joy of his heart, saying, This my son was dead in trespasses and sins, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. The angels in heaven rejoice over such a sinner as thou who repentest. Luke 15: 7, 10. The servants of God on earth cannot but participate in this joy; they praise God in that he has given thee repentance unto life. Acts 11: 18. Acts 15: 3.

But if thou canst not derive, from what has been advanced, any consolation for thy troubled soul, which is grievously tormented by the devil with divers temptations, in order that he may plunge thee into desperation:

Take, then, for a pattern, the woman of Canaan. She cried unto Jesus, saying, Have mercy upon me, for my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. She cried, but he answered her not a word; nevertheless she cried on. The disciples, moved by her incessant crying, besought him in her behalf; but he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered, it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs. O hard saying! the woman might have thought, He does not look upon me as a child, but as a filthy dog: O what further should I ask? How may I expect anything more from him? But no, such thoughts did not enter her mind; she took his saying in good part; she knew that she was an impure heathen, a stranger to the covenant of promise and an alien from the house of Israel; therefore she did not wish to be placed on an equality with the children, but she only desired as a filthy dog to gather up what the children let fall under their feet, and she

would be satisfied. At the sight of such humiliation Jesus could no longer restrain himself, but said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. Matt. 15.

Poor penitent, go and do likewise. Cry unto Jesus. Beseech him, saying, Have mercy on me, for my soul is grievously vexed with a devil. If he will not hear thee, pray the more earnestly. If he does not hear his disciples who entreat him in thy behalf, be not disheartened on this account; think of the woman; she came and fell down at his feet, and knowing that he was her only helper, she did not desist till she obtained relief. Do thou likewise; pray without ceasing; rest assured that help can be found no where but in Jesus Christ alone; and if he now delays helping, he will finally succor thee. The woman prayed for her daughter, and she was made whole; thou prayest for thy soul; wait in faith, and it also shall be made whole; for by his wounds we are healed. - Is. 53.

Think of the poor widow, who was aggrieved by her adversary, and in great distress; from whom was she to seek assistance? Nobody could relieve her but the judge of the city, who had power to relieve her if he would; but he was so hard hearted that he neither feared God, nor regarded man. Now, what counsel for the poor widow? How shall I

incline the hard-hearted judge to take my part? she might have thought. But necessity compelled her; she came came to him, and this was not enough; she entreated him, saying, Avenge me of my adversary. But he would not. She entreated again, Avenge me. But he would not for a while. Then she might have had reason to despair; she might well have thought, I must give up all for lost. But no, she had not lost hopes; she thought it would be worth while not to leave off crying, Avenge me! for she knew that as far as she could move him to compassion, so far she would obtain assistance, and that she could apply for help no where else but to him alone, as being the supreme judge of the city. Now what was the event? The widow importuned him so much that he at length thought within himself, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. Luke 18.

Distressed man, take this for thy consolation: The unjust judge condescended at length to avenge this poor widow on account of her continued entreaty; how much more will God who is not unjust, but righteous and merciful, avenge and bear long with thee, who criest unto him day and night. Yea, he will avenge thee speedily, says the Saviour. Verses 7, 8.

The widow had to do with an unjust judge, but thou with a merciful God. The widow had no promise from the judge that

he would assist her in her distress if she would ask him.

But, poor sufferer, how many promises hast thou from God, in which they are all yea and amen, for he is righteous, and it is impossible for God to lie. By which thou hast a strong consolation and refuge, and shouldst lay hold on the hope which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever. Heb. 6: 18, 19, 20.

He promises, that whatsoever things thou desirest when thou prayest, if thou believest that thou receivest them, thou shalt have them. Mark 11: 24. Matt. 21: 22. John 16: 24, 25. He promises thee, that if thou seekest him with all thy heart, he will be found of thee. Jer. 29: 13. Remember the poor publican; standing afar off he would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven; (he felt so unworthy in himself) but smote on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Hear the testimony of Christ, This man went down to his house justified rather than the pharisee, who had boasted of himself so highly. Luke 18.

III.

Think of him who fell among thieves, and lay naked and half dead in his blood. A.

priest and a Levite passed by; they showed him no compassion, they applied no medicine, they did not bind up his wounds, but left him lying in his blood; then might all hopes of life have been taken away or have entirely vanished. But it came to pass that a Samaritan, as he journeyed, saw him in his distress, had compassion on him, bound up his wounds, poured in oil and wine, set him on his beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. Luke 10.

In this mirror behold the naked and half dead sinner, who has not wherewith to cover his nakedness. His righteousness is taken from him, his heart is wounded, his sins are as scarlet, (Is. 1 : 18,) he can no longer help himself, he requires the aid of another, he stands in need of medical assistance. Who renders it to him? Not the Levitical priesthood: no, they pass by, they show more inclemency than favor; it must be a merciful heart; a heart thrilling with compassion and love; a heart that knows and possesses the means necessary to heal a wounded sinner, to wash away the crimson stains, and to clothe the naked sufferer. Come, sinner, and see if thou canst not find all this in Jesus. He came down from heaven and journeyed through the world; he passed along and saw thee (fallen man) polluted in thy own blood, and he said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live. For no eye pitied thee to

to do any of these things unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field to the loathing of thy person. Ezekiel 16.

In this condition, fallen sinner, thy Saviour found thee; he met thee thus in the field of the world, miserably smitten and wounded by the devil, who is a murderer from the beginning. There was no man who had power to assist thee: the law, with its Levitical priesthood, could not raise thee up nor wash thee; Jesus alone was able by his salutary gospel to cleanse thy wounds with his holy water and blood, and bind them up with his gracious gospel. Luke 18: 19. He descended from his grace and placed himself under the curse of the Father, that he might redeem us from the curse, and bring us through grace to a state of glory, that is, to mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, &c. Heb. 12. And in this sacred inn and church on earth he has given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Eph. 4: 11, 12.

To these his apostles and teachers he has given his word and spirit, that they may nourish and administer to such weak children as are chosen by his grace, that they may all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God, against the time of his second coming, when he will reward every man according to his works.

Therefore I repeat it, arise and come to thy Saviour. If thou canst not come as thou wouldst wish, sigh and pray to him; lo, he is not far from thee; thou hast not to ascend into heaven to bring him down from thence, neither hast thou to descend into the deep to bring him up again from the dead; for the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. Rom. 10: 6, 7, 8.

Therefore, if thy soul is sick and wounded, thou canst find medicine in Christ; if thy heart is bruised and broken, in Christ thou canst find a balm; art thou imprisoned? in Christ thou canst be free; art thou smitten? in Christ thou canst be set at liberty (Luke 4: 18); art thou a cripple? behold, he has prepared an entertainment for thee, where thou mayest taste the delicious fruits of the gospel; standest thou yet in the highway or behind the hedges? lo, he compels thee to come in (Luke 14); art thou weary and heavy laden with thy sins? hearken, he calleth thee, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matt. 11: 28. Yea, he will refresh every weary soul, and every soul that is sorrowful he will replenish. **Jer. 31: 25.** He will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. **Rev. 21: 6 and 22: 17.** **Is. 55: 1.** **John 7: 37.**

Afflicted man, receive all this for thy consolation, and strive manfully against the suggestions of satan. If he represents to thee the righteousness of God, represent to him Christ, thy ransom and reconciliation. If he would condemn thee, point him to Christ, thy justification; for who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (**Rom. 8**); wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. **Heb. 7: 25.**

Above all, take the shield of faith and the armor of prayer, wherewith thou shalt be able to quench all the fiery darts of satan, with which he endeavors to overwhelm thee. **Eph. 6.** David, in his despair, had said, I am cut off before thine eyes. But hear what he says again; Nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication, when I cried unto thee. **Ps. 31: 23.** The weapons that we must use against the enemy are prayer, confidence and hope in Christ; it is he that treads under foot the serpent; he is the chief

and the conquerer; he has blotted out the hand-writing that was against us, and slain the enmity. Col. 2. Eph. 2.

Observe, dear man, this is a state of grace, in which we are chastened, humbled, and divested of all our own strength and ability, and in this manner looked upon as children; for if we are without chastening, we are bastards, and not sons. Heb. 12. And of this chastisement we are all made partakers; we must pass through this crucifixion before we become new creatures.

IV.

But the nigher we draw to this mystic death, the nigher we approach the life hidden with Christ in God; and when, at length, by the law, we become dead to the law, we are made alive in Christ, (Col. 2, chap. 3. Rom. 6: 5,) that we may bring forth fruit unto God. Rom. 7: 4. In these sufferings we pass through the strait gate, where we put off the old man and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4. To this effect are the words of Paul, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. 2 Cor. 17. Here then the new man is born of the incorruptible seed of the word, by the power of Christ, (1 Pet. 1: 23,) and such

new born babes desire the sincere (or undiluted) milk of the gospel, which flows from the breast of Christ, that they may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2: 2); for they perceive now with Christ, that they live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. 4: 4. This evangelical word is then manifested to the soul in the light of Christ, so that she is enabled to see the mystery of the kingdom of God (Mark 4: 11); and she becomes a tree that spreads its branches far and wide in the soul, so that the birds of heaven, or all our thoughts and purposes, come and lodge in them. Matt. 13: 32. This is the treasure hid in the field of the heart, which the soul having found, rejoices exceedingly. Matt. 13: 44, 45, 46. Through this evangelical truth the soul is sanctified, according to the supplication of Christ, Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. John 17. And the Holy Spirit ever leads the soul in the knowledge of the truth, (John 16: 13,) in consequence of which the soul is confirmed in faith and the love of God, and constantly draws from this vital fountain new grace and strength, which become in it a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John 4: 14.

To this effect are these words of Christ, If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be

done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. John 15: 7, 8.

Also, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8: 31, 32.

James speaks to the same effect. Lay apart, says he, all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls. James 1: 12.

This gospel of the Lord Jesus, or his word, is the seed, (Matt. 13,) and the plant which our heavenly Father plants in us, and which grows and takes deep root in the soul, being irrigated and fructified by the Spirit and love of Christ. The spirit distils upon the soul like the dew upon mount Hermon, love tinges and foment: so that this heavenly plant grows and increases by the influence of the Spirit and of love like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Ps. 1. Jer. 17: 18. This is the branch in the vine Jesus, that bringeth forth much fruit, and which is constantly purged that it may bring forth more fruit. Such branches and members in Jesus are pure through the word, (John 15,) since they are begotten of his own will with the word of truth, that they should

be a kind of first fruits of his creature
James 1: 18. 1 Pet 1: 23.

This new man or spiritual plant grows and lives through faith in Christ and his doctrine; for as the natural body cannot live without bread or nourishment, so, neither can the new man subsist without spiritual nourishment; and this spiritual aliment, or food for the soul, is the word or will of God, which is received by the soul through faith, and is converted by the Spirit into life; for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, (John 6: 63,) and this life is the light of the new man, (John 1: 4,) and whosoever walketh in this light stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the new and heavenly world.

Here then applies the expression of Christ, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. John 4: 34. The life of the new man is that the soul do the will of Jesus and finish his work. This meat which nourisheth the soul, doth not perish but endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of man doth give. John 6: 27. The same is expressed in these words, Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. He eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, leth in me and I in him. John 6. This
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the Jews and many of the disciples did not understand; they therefore said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that they murmured, he made this reply, It is the Spirit that quickeneth; (mark) the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. And these spirit and life giving words of the Savior are the meat and strength of the soul; therefore Peter, when Jesus asked him whether they also would go away, returned this answer, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

The flesh of Christ is indeed our food, and his blood our drink, when we abide in him, and his words abide in us, as he himself tells us (John 15,) saying, If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

The same is shown by the apostle John, who says, By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments; for this is the love

of God that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5 : 2, 3. John 14 : 23, 24.

From these and many other passages of scripture it is evident that the real meat of the soul is, that she should do the will of Jesus, and as he was always subject to his heavenly Father, and lived by him, so the soul should be subject at all times to her Saviour and live by Jesus. John 6 : 57.

When Adam was created in the image of God, he was endowed with a living soul, and this divine and living soul had to be subject to the will of God; and in this subjection to his will consisted its life; but in case of opposition to the will of God and disobedience to his commandments, it had to suffer death. Gen. 2 : 16, 17.

Now, disobedience to God and his word is a meat by which the soul is killed in her divine nature; so again, submission to God and keeping his commandments is meat by which the soul is preserved in godliness unto everlasting life. David experienced this when he said, The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, &c. Ps. 19. Ps. 119.

Yea, the commandment of the Lord enlivens the soul and rejoices the heart; the-

greatest joy of a renewed soul is to do the will of God according to the tenor of his commandments; it is the meat that perishes not; his word is bread to the soul; the Spirit which (to all the unconverted) lies hid in the word, is the pure water; by this word and Spirit the soul is supplied with food and drink unto eternal life. John 8: 51 and 5: 24.

Beloved reader, whoever thou art, examine carefully thy own heart, and ask thy conscience whether thou hast traveled this way of repentance, and has passed through at the narrow gate, where thou hast lost thy own power and found the strength of Christ, where thou hast died to thyself and rose again with Christ, now walking with him in newness of life, as shown above; if so, take heed and be not seduced from the narrow way; hold fast to Jesus and his doctrine, for he is the true teacher, whom we should hear (Deut. 18: 15); he is the bishop of our souls; he is the way, the truth and the life; and no man cometh to the Father but by him. John 14: 6. Heb. 9. Heb. 7: 25. Heb. 10: 19, 20. Eph. 2: 18. He is given for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Is. 55: 4. He is the true high priest, mediator and reconciler, the immaculate Lamb of God that taketh away our sins, (John 1: 29, 36,) having purchased us with his blood, (1 Pet. 1,) and purified us unto himself a peculiar people Tit. 2: 14.

V.

The highly enlightened apostle Paul says, They have not all obeyed the gospel. Rom. 10: 16. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isaiah 53. Ah, why so? Because the natural man beholds in him no form nor comeliness, and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not. The reason why so few men arrive at the knowledge of Christ, is, that he is found under the cross and in self mortification; therefore his word has no place among them, they understand not his speech, nor can they hear his word, (John 8: 37, 43); but they become exasperated, as the Jews were, because they prefer the honor of man to the honor that cometh from God. Therefore they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. 2 Thess. 1: 9, 10.

O that all men would receive the sincere counsel of Christ, Enter ye in at the strait

gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and (O dreadful!) many there be which go in thereat; and strait is the gate (the old man goeth not in thereat, but the new man only) and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, (that is, the doctrine of salvation permits none but the new creature to walk therein) and few there be that find it. Matt. 7: 13, 14.

The first reason is that we must first become poor in spirit, and full of godly sorrow, clothed in humility and meekness in the presence of God, must hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousness, extend mercy and forbearance unto all men, that so we may die through the law unto our own will, pride, lust and false righteousness, and be, like Adam before he became a living soul, in the hands of God as the lifeless clay of the potter; then shall we, as being dead, hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall live. John 5: 25. In this manner the gate of life is unfolded unto us by the love of Jesus, and the living way of faith laid open, (Heb. 9: 14,) so that we pass through from death unto life, (John 5: 24,) and have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Rom. 5: 1.

But this is a hard task for flesh and blood, and one for which they have a very powerful aversion; hence there be so few that enter in at the gate of life, and so many that

remain in the broad way of the flesh which leadeth to destruction.

The second reason why the way is so narrow and there be so few that find it, is that the doctrine of Christ cuts off from us all liberty of the flesh, and requires us to curb and restrain our passions and propensities, that we may be the light of the world and the salt of the earth; our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees; our hatred must be changed into love, our resentment into forgiveness; our life must be holy and pure; the carnal eye must be plucked out and cast away, that we may not look upon a woman to lust after her, lest we have already committed adultery with her; we must not rejoice in the folly and licentiousness of others; for they who commit such things, and they who take pleasure in them, are equally criminal. Rom. 1: 32. We should let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Eph. 4: 29. We should, above all things, swear not at all; our words should be yea, yea, and nay, nay; whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. We must not resist evil with force, nor sue, contend and go to law about any earthly possession, knowing in ourselves that we have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Heb. 10: 34. We should wil-

lingly give and impart to men in necessity ; should love not only our neighbors as the ancient Israelites did, but also our enemies ; we ought to bless those who curse us, pray for them when they despitefully use us and persecute us. When we do our alms, we should not let the left hand know what the right hand doeth ; we should worship God in spirit and in truth, in the closet of our heart, not babbling with the mouth independent of the concurrence of the soul. We should fast without being of a sorrowful countenance, like the hypocrites. Our treasure should be laid up in heaven, not on earth ; thither should be directed the single eye of our mind. We should not serve two masters, but should cleave to God alone ; our hearts ought not to be surcharged with the cares of this world, but our cares should be committed to God. We should not judge indiscreetly without the word of God. We ought not to cast our holy things to dogs, nor our pearls before swine. In short, we must forsake all, father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, house, lands, nay, even our own life, or we cannot be the disciples of Christ Jesus. Matt. 10. Luke 14. [As all these brief citations have been in this book one after another, clearly illustrated by the scripture.]

Behold, dear reader, this, this is the narrow way of self-denial ; this is the way along which so few go and enter into life ; the rea-

son why many try to enter in and shall not be able, is, that they will not deny themselves and follow Christ. Hence it comes to pass that many are called, but few are chosen. Matt. 22: 14. Luke 13.

VI

O ye sanctified souls, who have passed through the strait gate, stand upon your guard and be anxiously careful that you do not, like Israel in the wilderness, acquire an aversion to this heavenly manna, namely the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which saveth the soul, lest your hearts lust again after the fleshpots of Egypt, which you already have left. Num. 11. Remember they fell; the word preached did not profit them, (Heb. 4: 2,) though they heard it, but they fell because of unbelief, (Heb. 3: 17 to 19,) and did not obtain the promised inheritance. There is also a promise made unto us as well as unto them, not by Moses, but by the Son himself, not of a literal land and kingdom, but of a spiritual and everlasting kingdom. To this he has opened a way for us, and shown by the gospel that we should walk therein by faith in all obedience and submission; that we should look unto him, and not suffer ourselves to be misled by those who walk according to their own opinions, resting satisfied with outward ordinances while they are destitute of the internal and only true life that proceeds from God,

are not made partakers with Christ, and know not the mysteries of the kingdom of God, being without reason greatly puffed up in their own vain conceits. Phil. 2. Such are false prophets, thieves and murderers of the soul, who climb up some other way, concerning whom Christ and the whole scriptures abundantly and earnestly warn us to flee and avoid them.

Let every one take special care that he do not set up his own heart a leader in Christ's stead, as many do, desiring to be masters or teachers of the scriptures (through their own reason); understanding (in a proper light,) neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm, (1 Tim. 1 : 7,) but let the Spirit of Christ be your pillar of fire, showing you the unknown way of truth, leading you through the savage wilderness of this world, and equipping you with the power of God, so that you may be mighty in the word of truth, prevailing against all the enemies of the soul, by the power of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. 2. Cor. 6.

O thou small and chosen number of saints, who are called from all the ends of the earth

with a holy eall, hold fast humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Take the doctrine of Christ in spirit and in power for your rule, and they shall be to your souls consolation and strength; neither add nor diminish, but remain child-like followers. Follow no man further than he follows Christ and walks in his spirit; for he that hath not the spirit of Christ, is none of his, (Rom. 8: 9,) and if any man preach any other gospel than that which has been preached unto us long since by Christ and his apostles, let him be accursed. Gal. 1: 8, 9.

Benign reader, when thou readest these pages, thou mayst perhaps think, This is a hard saying, who can hear it. John 8: 10. My reply is, The person to whom this is a hard saying, cannot be indeed a disciple of Jesus; and if he has even recognized Christ in part as his Messiah, yet he has not confessed him like Peter and the other apostles; for did he so confess him, the following acknowledgment would naturally follow: Lord to whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life. Verse 38. For there is nothing else advanced here, as I hope to God, but eternal truth and the beatific doctrine of Jesus Christ, not in high sounding words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration and power of the Spirit, and of a single heart, to the glory of God and my Redeemer Jesus Christ. Amen.

Therefore, beloved man, whoever thou art, that makest thy boast of being a child of God, and conformest not to the doctrine of Christ, thy glorying is in vain, and thy faith a mere deceptive opinion, which will not stand in the presence of God (2 John, verse 9); and even if thou boastest of a remarkable conversion and renovation, of visions and revelations, of faith in Jesus and his love towards thee, of an angel's light, which, according to thy opinion, has shone upon thee, and the like, yet I say with Paul, If in appearance thou even exhibitest thyself as an angel from heaven, still thou art accursed or proscribed. Gal. 1. Otherwise all the following passages of scripture are of no effect.

Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. 2 John, verse 9.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. 1 John, 2: 4, 5.

Christ says, Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John 15: 14.

Also, If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14: 15.

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love. John 15: 10.

Also, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and

we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. John 14: 23, 24.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5: 3.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. John 8: 51.

And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 6: 46.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Rev. 22: 14. Rev. 14: 12. Rev. 12: 17. Deut. 18.

Here stands the irrevocable word of God, and will for ever stand. All who believe this with their whole heart, will bow, with faithful Abraham, to his word, in preference to their own reason, and be obedient in all things; for we may with great propriety say, Here is shown unto us what is good and what the Lord requires of us, namely, to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. Micah 6: 8. I repeat it, All who fear God and truly believe his word, are unwilling to hold counsel with flesh and blood, but go forward with Paul and follow the heavenly light, Christ Jesus, in his word: and

even if they have to lose on this account house, lands, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and even their own natural life by fire or sword, as God may permit, yet they would rather bear all this with joy, than wilfully transgress one of the least of God's commandments. Of this my soul is convinced of God; which also is abundantly testified by the numerous examples of the martyrs.

Question: If it is as here represented, what are we to think of those men who pretend to a remarkable conversion, and appear to be enlightened, but who employ the magistrate to put the law in force against their debtors and sell their goods by the constable or sheriff, to a great disadvantage, making a great cost, merely, as they think, to obtain their own; and further, for a small sum of money frequently continue in strife and litigation, having no regard to the cost, if they can only accomplish their end. Notwithstanding Christ says, If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, (Matt. 5: 40,) and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. Luke 6: 30. Answer: A man can in part be converted from his gross and heinous sins, and be brought by the light of Christ to a life of virtue, in which he may see his wretched condition; and tremble thereat, and, for the time being, begin to conform his life and conversation more and more to the tenor of the

holy scriptures, which is a good beginning; but the enemy of all good enters craftily into man's reason, and through the reason into the understanding, and having taken captive the understanding, which is now somewhat enlightened, gives here and there, (particularly where the scripture interdicts us entirely and brings us completely under self-denial) false interpretations and perverted constructions, as was done to Evé, Has God said so and so? Should a person live so strictly? Not at all, that has another meaning; in this way a man could not get through the world, &c. If a person does not bring into captivity his reason to the obedience of Christ, (2 Cor. 10 : 5,) his reason brings the will into captivity; and when it reigns over the will and the understanding, then it goes on exactly to the wish of satan, who leads us further and further from God, the true light, by means of his false prophet (reason) teaching us out of the holy scriptures, but by perverting the plain sense of the same, particularly where they require strict self-denial and the mortifying of the deeds of the body: As to the rest he is satisfied if we pray frequently, hold fine and religious exercises, give many alms, preach a great deal, and, as teachers of righteousness, point out to men repentance and faith in Jesus Christ; if he can only set all in motion by reason, he is satisfied. For he is well aware that these his servants will not bring

their hearers any farther than they are themselves; and when they have brought them thus far, they exalt them to heaven, and commend them as the blessed children of God: reason, by means of the magic or enchanting power of satan, produces this effect upon the carnal minds of the hearers, and elevates them to a tone of joy, so that they praise God for this grace, which they think (though erroneously) to have received from him. This is frequently to be seen at the present day, but particularly among the Methodists, though the fruit shows that they do not, in most instances, walk according to the doctrine and example of Christ, but rather in the fashion and mode of this world, although we ought not to mind high things, but should condescend to men of low estate (Romans 12 : 16); for whatsoever is high among men, is an abomination before God.

In this manner the dragon gives power to the lamb-like beast in such men by their reason and natural ability to make fire come down from heaven; that is, to preach righteousness in a terrific manner to the atrocious sinner, so that it falls upon his heart like a burning fire, and throws him into anguish and distress for his sins, makes him call aloud, and cry out, and gives great signs of a real conversion. But these signs are given by the dragon to the lamb-like beast for the sole purpose of his deceiving those who dwell

on the earth by means of the miracles he has power to do. Rev. 13. These are they who will come and say, Have we not prophesied, cast out devils, and done many mighty works in thy name? (Observe: It was not Christ that performed these works through them, but they themselves, through the aid of a strange and magic spirit infused into them by the dragon, have by their own reason and self-ability done these wonders, as did the magicians of Egypt.) Therefore Christ answers them, Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. Matt. 7.

Therefore let every one remember that all conversions, not leading to a true imitation of Christ and an exact observance of his commandments, are impositions of the devil, are counterfeit coin which is not able to stand the test. But as people are easily deceived by counterfeit coin, in consequence of its bearing a resemblance to the pure and unadulterated gold or silver, so inexperienced and credulous men, who have not yet found the true touchstone, the word of God, may very easily be imposed upon by a false conversion, inasmuch as it bears a resemblance to a genuine change of heart. Therefore Christ says, Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Matt. 7: 15. Behold, under the sheep's clothing of the gospel and under the fair appearance of conversion, this

wolf has his seat, his enormous teeth meanwhile being hid, he creeps into houses, and leads captive silly women (that is, persons weak and inexperienced in the word of God, as regards the Spirit) laden with sins, led away captive with divers lusts. 2 Tim. 3. O that satan would exhibit himself in his own colors, then all would flee from him. O that every teacher might see within himself what spirit he is a child of, then would men certainly beware. But now it is concealed from the world, and why? Because they receive not the love of the truth, (namely, the beatific doctrine of Jesus Christ) that they might be saved; and for this cause God sends them a strong delusion that they believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thes. 2: 10, 11.

O christendom; how art thou fallen! O thou fairest vineyard of the Lord, how art thou so deplorably spoiled by the cunning foxes, (Sol. Song 2: 15,) and so shamefully laid waste by the faithless husbandmen! Matt. 21. Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto thy sorrow, which is done unto thee (Lamen. 1: 12); for thy breach is great like the sea; who can heal it? Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee; and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity. Lam. 2: 13, 14. The city of peace lies waste, all its

uniformity is destroyed ; thou art divided into numerous sects, and scattered abroad in perverted opinions ; for thou hast forsaken thy true head, and despised the doctrine of truth ; therefore thou liest imprisoned in Babel, and by thy apostacy hast become a mighty Babel. It might with propriety be said of thee as was said by the prophet concerning Judah, (Jerem. 11 : 13,) According to the number of thy cities (or religions) are thy goods ; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem, (or according to the number of ways thou teachest besides the true way of life) hast thou set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto strange gods. O return, thou backsliding Israel, (or christendom) saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon thee ; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever ; only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers (or strange doctrines) under every green tree (or every mode of worship in which the flesh can live in pleasure) ; and hast not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord. Jer. 3 : 12, 13. But as the Lord constantly sent his prophets to hard-hearted Judah and Israel, reproved them of their idolatry, and warned them to repent, and still all was of no avail till wrath at length came upon them, and the Lord removed them away from his

sight ; so, I am afraid, it will be with thee, O christendom ! for the Lord has constantly sent thee at all times witnesses of his truth, and reprov'd thee on account of thy idolatry ; but thou wouldst not hear, continually persisting in idolatry and false doctrine ; and this was not enough, but thou hast despised those who were sent unto thee ; which thing thou dost even at this day. Therefore, I fear, thy plagues will come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and thou shalt be utterly burnt with fire : for strong is the Lord God who will judge thee. Rev. 18 : 8.

But to you especially, ye sincere and upright souls, is my serious exhortation, that ye may truly look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, and exercise great circumspection, lest you be deceived either from within or from without ; for even now is the time when, if it was possible, the very elect might be deceived. Matt. 24. Therefore look not unto yourselves, nor unto any man, but unto Christ and his doctrine, and ask of him wisdom and acknowledge, as James says, (chap. 1 : 5,) If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering ; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind, and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. Christ says,

What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall receive them, (Mark. 11 : 24. Matt. 21 : 22); for all these things are possible to him that believeth (Mark 9 : 23); and what is impossible with us, is possible with God. Matt. 19 : 26. Therefore embrace Christ in true faith, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls (James 1 : 21); it teaches you the true way to life, it is a lamp to your feet, it rejoices your heart and enlightens your eyes (Ps. 19,) through the co-operating grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may avoid all the snares of satan and learn to know all false prophets; for no man is able to pluck you out of his hand, (John 10,) if you only abide in him, and his word in you, (John 15 : 7,) and the same be written in you with the Spirit of the living God, (2 Cor. 3 : 3. Jer. 31 : 33,) that your only work may be to do the will of Jesus, and finish (not your own, but) his work. John 4 : 34. Lo! this is the imperishable meat which endureth unto everlasting life (John 6 : 27); hence abide in the doctrine of Christ, (and even if all men were opposed to you) you have both the Father and the Son, and shall with him be more than conquerors through him that loved us, so that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other

creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8.

Eternal Light ! illuminate
Who call upon thee soon and late,
Who under sin's most grievous load,
Sigh unto thee, O gracious God !
Have mercy on them, make them free
From all their sins eternally.

Renew them in thy image pure,
Give them faith's shield both strong and sure,
As likewise light around to see,
That they may ne'er diverted be
From path of truth so plain and even,
Till they arrive in yonder heaven.

Though christendom in deep disguise
While here on earth may them despise,
O grant thy path they e'er may see,
And always follow after thee.
O Jesus, do thy flock preserve,
That they may never from thee swerve.

In present time with troubles rife,
Where brethren live in constant strife,
And 'gainst each other judgment found,
Though there is no sufficient ground,
It does from self and party come,
O wo, thou fallen christendom !

Remove this evil, blessed Lord,
Both by thy spirit and thy word,
As thou at the apostles' time,
Didst Jews and Gentiles all combine,
So now, O Lord of heaven true,
Join all in one who thee pursue.

And bring them, O thou Shepherd Great !
Into one herd, I thee entreat ;
O make thy truth to all appear,
O grant that all may lend an ear,
That by its bright illumining gleam,
The day on many hearts may beam !

That antichrist may be revealed,
Who in sheep's clothing is concealed,
Weak souls prepared to captivate,
Oppressed with sins and vices great,
Made by deceit and falsehood blind,
That they may Jesus never find.

Awake, awake, ye children good,
Observe how the great multitude
The prophet false and beast adore,
Desire the word of God no more.
Hence on your guard assiduous stand,
The Son of man is nigh at hand.

The signs move on with rapid speed,
Let us poor mortals all take heed,
That at the coming of the Lord,
He may us find upon our guard,
And say, Ye children come with me,
And spend a blest eternity.

CHAPTER NINTH.

Embraces a portion from the 15th verse to the end of the chapter, wherein it is explained how a person must know the false prophets and try them by the doctrine of Christ. It contains, in addition, a call to the teachers of the present day, as also to the common people.

Gentle and pious reader, we will now proceed to the conclusion of this sermon, and see how plainly Christ shows us that all who hear this his doctrine, or these sayings (which he declared unto the people in his discourse on the mount) and do them, are likened unto wise men who build their house upon a rock, which remains firm. But they who hear and do not, are likened unto foolish men, and their house or christianity will not stand, since it is built upon sand, or the opinions of men.

Now our salvation consists in the love of God and in keeping his commandments, so that we have a rule laid down, by means of which we are enabled (if we have received the spirit which is concealed in the scripture from the natural man) to distinguish the disciples of Jesus from the disciples of the pharisees. Christ did not do his own will, but the will of his Father who sent him. John 5: 30. John 4: 34. In like manner his disciples did not do their own will, but the will of Jesus Christ; for the Holy Ghost,

says Christ, shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. John 16: 14, 15.

But it was quite different with the pharisees; for they thought it no great matter to transgress the commandments of God with their traditions (Matt. 3: 6); their disciples must likewise live according to their traditions, or they will be excommunicated. John 9: 22. John 12: 42, 43.

The former condition obtains in regard to all true disciples of Jesus and messengers of God; they have ever the same mind that was in Christ, (Phil. 2: 15,) they know his voice and follow him, (John 10,) they show whatsoever they have heard in the beginning from Christ and his apostles and all the holy prophets, and walk therein even as Christ himself walked (1 John 2: 6); for they are ambassadors in Christ's stead, announcing the instructions they received from the Lord.

But the contrary is the case with all who still walk in the footsteps of the old pharisees, who do not hesitate transgressing the doctrine of Christ by their own traditions, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake (Tit. 1: 11); and this is no wonder, for the devil has by his cunning craftiness brought measures to such a pass, that christianity has become, in most instances, among the great sects, a mere outward profession, which one man learns from another; for if a person studies a certain length of time

in a seminary of learning, and in his examination gives evidence that he has become a proficient in the theology or form of religion established by a particular sect, he is constituted a teacher, and must then preach according to the model prescribed to and learned by him, and not according to Christ and his doctrine; for so soon as he would do this, he would be excommunicated after the manner of the pharisees of old. Therefore Christ says, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Matt. 7: 15 to 20.

My dear reader, since then Christ has pointed out to us the fruit as an infallible sign by which we are enabled to find out and know the wolf concealed in sheep's clothing; so we must possess something also by which we may try the fruit and see whether it is good or evil, namely the Spirit and doctrine of Christ. Unless we have the Spirit of Christ we cannot try

any man by the doctrine of Christ; for it is to us a mystery, being concealed from our earthly understanding. Wherefore it is a difficult matter to give to earthly, indocile and frivolous men any instruction respecting the difference between true and false prophets. Nevertheless by the help of God I will come to a more particular consideration of the subject: I am well aware that if I crush the cockatrice's eggs hatched by the false prophets, a viper will break out against me, but if I eat them I must die Is. 59: 5. Therefore I would rather fall into disrepute with them and retain the favor of God, than possess their favor and subject myself to the resentment of God; for they can do no more than kill the body, but God has power to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matt. 10: 28.

I.

Christ says, (John 10,) Verily, verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. Observe now, dear reader, Christ is the door of the sheep, (verse 7,) the sheepfold is his church, Christ is the door or

strait gate through which all christians must enter into the sheepfold or church of God, (as I have frequently shown in this little work.) If now all christians must enter by this door into the church of God, how much more then a teacher, whose duty it is to watch the sheep. To him must the porter (the Holy Spirit) open, that he may know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, in order to feed his flock, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being a lord over God's heritage, but being an ensample to the flock. 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3.

But whosoever climbs up another way, without a real change of heart, and the true renewing and illumination of the Holy Spirit through the revelation of Jesus Christ, and having ascended the pulpit by means of his school divinity and learned acquirements, preaches that which he has learned as an outward profession by his reason and the wisdom of man, which is folly with God; the same is a thief and a robber; he robs God of his honor; he runs where he is not sent; he covers himself with sheep's clothing, while the wolf sits in his heart, and not Christ; therefore he is a thief and a robber; he does nothing but steal, kill and destroy (verse 10); he promises men liberty, while he himself is a servant of corruption (2 Pet. 2: 19); he says, Peace, peace, where there is

no peace, and pollutes the name of God among the people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread; he slays the souls that should not die, and saves the souls alive that should not live, (Ezek. 13,) according to the custom of the false prophets of old, who were very numerous in all ages of the word, not to mention the heathen priests, but among the chosen people of God; and the number of the pious was at all times very small: and if this applied only to those times, then, in our opinion the evil would not be so great. But, pious reader, take an unprejudiced view of christendom through the medium of the scriptures, and see whether a person does not find fewer righteous in our day than in those times. Is there not reason to lament with Jeremiah, chap. 8. This people of christendom slides back by a perpetual backsliding, they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle, &c.

II.

But to return to our purpose, we will examine the doctrine of Christ, and compare it with the doctrine of our present preachers, and see how they agree with each other, that

every one may the more easily distinguish the true from the false teachers.

I have already shown if a teacher does not enter in by Christ the door, pass thus from death unto life, and receive his office from the Holy Ghost, (Acts 20: 28,) but climbs up some other way, that such a one is a thief and a robber, a prickly thorn, from which a person can gather no grapes, and a sharp and stinging thistle, from which he can collect no figs. For he is yet unregenerated, his evil nature is still alive, the wolf has possession of his heart; he cannot entirely conceal himself when a person approaches and lays hold of him, under his sheep's mantle, with the word and spirit of Christ, and endeavors to expose him to the view of other men whom he has held a long time in blindness. Ah how soon will he then show his wolf teeth, how soon one can see that he is a prickly thorn and a stinging thistle. Such were the pharisees: outwardly they appeared beautiful unto men, but within they were full of uncleanness and dead men's bones. What one among the people of the Jews could believe this in regard to their doctrine, particularly when they lived in strict external piety? But Christ looked further than the exterior sheep's clothing; he detected their hypocrisy and exposed their base deception to the view of all the people, and

pronounced the most dreadful woes upon them, without paying any respect to the appearance of external piety; but how soon did the wolf display himself! They looked with indignation and wrath upon Jesus, and had no rest till they brought him to the cross!

So now, who among the so named christians can believe that the greatest number of the teachers of the present time are similarly circumstanced with the former? Ah, there are few who believe this; for they suppose, if a person preaches from a scriptural text, he teaches the word of God: he may live almost in such manner as to him appears proper, yet he is considered as a preacher of God's word, which he is not: for if he has the whole scripture by heart, and is not a participant of the spirit which lies concealed in the scripture or word of God, he does not preach the word of God, and indeed cannot; for John says, He whom God hath sent speaketh the word of God. Paul says, We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, (mark) but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual! But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness

unto him ; (mark) neither can he know them, (if he cannot know them he cannot teach them) because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. 2.

III.

A teacher of this description, having independent of the Spirit of God, ascended the pulpit according to the manner and form established by any sect, is able by his preaching, baptism and communion, to make others such christians as he himself is. For if a person can recite the chief articles of the catechism, and understands a little of the letter, he is, as soon as confirmed, received as a good christian, being rendered already by baptism a child of God. After this he may live as he pleases ; if he only attends church and receives the communion regularly, all is well. Behold now, in this manner the sects (I will not say churches) are propagated by hereditary succession, but not by the Spirit : in this manner the communicants are consoled as though they were good christians, at the same time that they are ignorant of Christ as regards the power ; he is avowed merely by an outward profession and an earthly knowledge of the letter of the scripture ; and such inexperienced persons form to themselves such a conception of Christ as the Mahometans do of Mahomet, thinking they shall be redeemed through him, or as other

heathens do of their dumb idols, though they do not possess the power of godliness; this is shown to be the case by their spiritless, proud, vain, carnal and licentious life, together with lies and deceit, dancing and playing, cursing and swearing, fornication and adultery, and the like sins and vices. Ah, were they truly baptised christians, then all these sins would be done away, and the fruit of the Spirit would manifest itself to all the world, which is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, righteousness, and truth. Gal. 5: 22. Eph. 5: 9. But the former are the fruits of the flesh which the false prophets bring forth: inasmuch as they are themselves carnal and not spiritual, they bring forth carnal christians; for that like produces like is a law of nature: that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit. John 3: 6. It follows incontestably that if a teacher is born of God, and appointed to his office by the spirit of God, and Christ speaks and operates by him, his doctrine must penetrate the heart, and bring forth fruit: and what is the fruit? When Peter, actuated by the spirit of the Lord, opened his mouth, and announced the crucified Saviour on the day of pentecost, his words pierced their hearts and they cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then burst forth the tears of repentance, then they

gladly received the word, not the word of man, but the word of God; then were they baptised in the faith of the operation of God, (Col. 2: 12,) the whole company were of one heart and mind, there was heavenly harmony, the rich condescended to men of low estate; one was not subject to another, but distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Acts 2 and 4. These are the blessed fruits of the gospel, made known by the true messengers of God; but where do we see such fruit among those who boast of being christians at the present time? Ah, rather the contrary. Wherefore we may with propriety say of these unregenerated teachers, in the words of the prophet, They weave the spider's web, but it shall not become a garment, neither shall they cover themselves with their works; their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Is. 59: 6.

IV.

For this reason I will now consider their doctrine as compared with the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, not excepting any particular sect. Let every one examine and try his own work by the doctrine of Christ. First, Christ expresses himself in these words: I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother (without a cause) shall be in danger of the judgment, and whosoever shall

say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council, but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, is in danger of hell fire. Matt. 5: 22. Dear reader, reflect deeply upon this in the fear of God, and see whether many teachers do not uphold a doctrine the very reverse of that contained in this passage. For many support the opinion that it is right for Christians to go to war, and kill and destroy one another with swords and deadly weapons. Reflect.

2. Christ says, A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13: 34, 35. Now mark.

But these teachers say, Be manly and valiant in fight, stand firm in defence of your country, and fear not; trust in God, and if you fall, die like heroes and christians. And to imprint this thoroughly into their minds, they usually administer the sacrament to them previously to their taking the field, that they may perhaps be the more certain of a happy result. O false comforters, who act thus in opposition to Christ and his doctrine!

Christ says, Love one another, as I have loved you. Now did not Christ lay down his life for his sheep? John 10. And ought we not to lay down our lives for the brethren

or fellow christians? 1 John 3: 16. Doubtless, if we are real christians. For whosoever hateth his brother (not even killing him) is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Verse 15.

Now Christians (as they are considered) hate one another, though when they do even this, they have not eternal life abiding in them; much less can they have eternal life, when they, not only hate, but wage war, kill, destroy, and exterminate, make widows and orphans, and this by the encouragement of their teachers. Oh reflect and consider! I presume thou canst easily observe the wolf in sheep's clothing, of which Christ has warned us, that we should beware. Is not every true christian constrained with the prophet to say respecting such teachers, There is a conspiracy of the prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey: they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst thereof, &c. Ezekiel 22: 25.

3. Christ says, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Matt. 10: 16. But what shall the sheep of Christ do in the midst of the wolves? Shall they oppose, kill and destroy them? Ah no! They will much rather flee, as Christ their Shepherd

enjoined upon them, saying, When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another. Verse 23.

But these men, under the cloak of Christ, oppose not only Turks or Heathens when they are chased by them from city to city; but christian opposes christian, each endeavoring to destroy the other; wherefore it is evident that they are not real christians, but rather antichristians. For he that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. Matt. 12: 30. Luke 11: 23.

Here doubtless will be brought in as an objection the instructions of Paul to the Romans, Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, &c. Rom. 13. I answer, If kings and magistrates are christians, why do they not fulfil this commandment, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, seeing it is one of the greatest commandments? Mark 12: 31. For love worketh no ill to his neighbor and is the fulfilling of the law, says Paul. Rom. 13; 9, 10. If all (the so named) christian rulers lived in obedience to this law of love, and did, according to the commandments of Christ, unto others as they would wish others to do unto them, which is the law and the prophets (Matt. 7: 12. Luke 6: 31,) then all war and fury, and garments rolled in blood, would inevitably become fuel for the fire, (Is. 9,) and there would be peace on earth. But so long as self-interest

is the moving principle among the mighty ones of the earth, as well as among those of inferior rank, there is little else to be hoped for but contention and war; self-interest insatiable in itself, exerts a powerful influence upon men of inferior station, the sphere of whose action is very limited; much more then is this the case with men of the highest order; for possessed of power, they think it a light matter for thousands to perish by the sword, and vast numbers of their poor subjects to be reduced to misery with their families, merely that they may enlarge somewhat the boundaries of their dominions, and preserve untarnished their honor and their fame; so that we may join the prophet in his lamentation, Her princes in the midst thereof (in christendom) are like wolves ravening the prey to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain, (for which this is the greatest reason) her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. Ezekiel 22: 27, 28. Micah 3: 3, 4.

O ye martial spirits, teachers and all, who approve of the shedding of blood upon the battle field, and endeavor to establish the propriety of it by the gospel of Jesus Christ, which above all things publishes the glad tidings of peace; so much so that the angels descended from heaven at the birth of our

Saviour, proclaimed peace, and in fulness of joy cried out, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men ! Luke 2: 14. But you, who represent yourselves as evangelical and spiritual teachers of righteousness, and ambassadors in Christ's stead, carry notwithstanding the sword in your mouth, if not at your side, (the innocent are not to be included) inciting men to deeds of slaughter and desolation. Christ said to his disciples, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. John 14: 27. Now it is evident that you have not received this peace, or you could not proclaim anything but what is consistent with peace, as was the constant practice of the apostles in all their epistles. Rom. 13: 8, 9, 10. 1 Cor. 1: 10. 1 Cor. 13. Gal. 5: 13, 14, 15. Eph. 4. Phil. 2: 2. Phil. 1: 27. Col. 3. 1 Tim. 1: 5. 1 Pet. 1: 22. 1 John 3. Ch. 4. Heb. 13: 1. James 2: 8. James 4.

Oh ye men, should not the irrational sheep or the harmless doves sufficiently convince you that your doctrine is erroneous? For if you were to try to set a flock of sheep a fighting so that they might kill and destroy one another, you could not accomplish your purpose, and you would have as little power to instigate them against their enemies, the wolves, from which they would immediately flee. In like manner the dove does not contend with the hawk, but flies from him.

Should not these harmless animals, by which christians are represented, be enough to make you ashamed in the presence of God, and convince you that you have never yet been made partakers of the lamblike disposition of Jesus; should you not then discover of yourselves, that you have climbed up some other way, and are therefore thieves and robbers?

Christ rebuked his disciples when they desired to pray for vengeance as Elias had done under the law, and said, The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Luke 9: 55, 56. Ought you not, who boast of being the children of God, to do likewise? Ah no, this would not be consistent with your honor; you are hired servants and must therefore still serve in the old way, even though it may be contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But alas! when you appear before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of your stewardship, then it will be hard for you to resist the stings of a guilty conscience; then will you be speechless, because you did not put his gospel to better account, and ye shall hear, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not. Matt. 7: 23.

For Christ says, Ye shall not resist evil. Matt. 5: 39. You declare the contrary.

Christ says, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate

you, pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you, &c. Verse 44.

Remember, all these passages of scripture will be your judges on that day, and will condemn you who teach the contrary; since the words that he has spoken shall judge men in the last day. John 12: 47, 48.

5. Christ says, If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also (Matt. 5: 40); and give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. Luke 6: 29, 30. Here we are expressly forbidden by Christ to contend with any man, or go to law about any thing, even the necessities of life, as is sufficiently illustrated in the third chapter of this work. However, this I may add, that there are many in our days, teachers and others, who do not approve of war or the outward sword, professing to be defenceless men; but when it comes to the sword of the law, and any one tries to deprive them of their goods, then they have resort to force and employ it as much as the others who approve of the outward sword. Now I know not whether a person can excuse them much better than the others; for christians to march forth with swords and weapons against christians, as also against their greatest enemies, is in direct opposition to the gospel of Jesus Christ; this is an irrefragable fact capable of being sub-

stantiated by numerous passages of scripture.

Christians are also as clearly and explicitly forbidden by Christ to sue, go to law, and repel force by force, as they are interdicted the employment of the outward sword. For if any person does me an injury, and I am a follower of Christ, he informs me, Thou shalt not resist evil. If I shall not resist, I must, like Job, bear it with patience, and do good to him that injured me, and pray for him sincerely, because he has despitefully used me and persecuted me. And if I pray for him, I must from my heart forgive him his faults committed against me, as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven me the faults I committed against him. Col. 3: 13. Of this Christ set us an example, when on the cross he prayed for his enemies, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Luke 23: 34. Peter says, Render not evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 1 Pet. 3: 9. Paul, likewise, says, See that none render evil for evil unto any man (1 Thess. 5: 15); [no man is excepted]; also 1 Cor. 6: 7. There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? &c. Also, Rom. 12: 21, Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. This is the

evangelical rule for christians, by which they ought to regulate their walk and conversation. But whosoever hears this self-denying doctrine of Christ, and does it not, because it is opposed to his carnal mind, shall hear from Christ, Thou art likened to a foolish man who builds his house on the sand, which will not stand in the day of trial.

O ye litigious men, who employ force against one another, not only in war, but in lawsuits and arbitrations, as far as in you lies, being often vexed that you cannot carry it to greater extent: how can you with a clear conscience offer up that part of the Lord's prayer, Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors? Or, as Luke has it, Forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us, Matt. 6: 12. Luke 11: 4. Ought not your conscience to check you when you repeat, Forgive us as we also forgive? If God should forgive and deal with you as you deal with those who are indebted to you, bringing them before the court or casting them into prison; then, that which you ask of him every time you pray that he shall do unto you as you do unto them, is this, that for the sins you have committed against him he shall bring you to judgment, and cast you into the prison of hell. Remember now, that if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive your trespasses, (Matt. 6: 15,) and

with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. Matt. 7: 2.

6. Christ says, Swear not at all, &c., but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. Matt. 5. James speaks in a similar manner. Chap. 5: 12.

But this doctrine is by many not regarded, but rather opposed by passages of scripture perverted from their true sense; though Christ has expressly forbidden all christians to swear, and James earnestly reminded his brethren of the same thing. But it is not necessary to give a further exposition in this place, since it is sufficiently explained in the third chapter. Consult it with deliberation.

Dear reader, by all this thou art enabled to perceive the fact, that antichrist has sat for a long time in the temple of God, where, according to the ordinance of the Father, Christ alone should sit, having ventured to set up his own law in opposition to Christ and his doctrine; his motions were clandestine in the days of the apostles, but now the mystery of iniquity is revealed, (2 Thessa. 2,) not to all men, but to whomsoever it is given.

V.

A true teacher is an ambassador in Christ's stead; publishing and upholding the commission of the Lord Jesus: he is steward of the mysteries of God, having received his trust

from God without money and without price (Is. 55: 1. Matt. 10: 8. Rev. 22: 17. Rev. 21: 6); he ought therefore, out of pure love, without money and without price, to oversee the household of God on earth, giving them instructions in regard to the mode of conducting themselves in all the precepts of the gospel; as the example of the apostles plainly shows us; so that Paul, speaking of himself, says, Yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. 1 Cor. 9: 16, 17, 18. Christ, likewise, says, Freely ye have received, freely give. Matt. 10: 8. Peter also speaks to the same purpose: Feed, says he, the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3.

Dear reader, take now a view (together with the testimony of the apostles) of those teachers who will not teach unless they have a fixed salary of from a hundred to two thousand dollars a year, and some even more, for their preaching: if, after serving one congre-

gation for a time, a greater sum is offered them by another, they immediately take leave of the former under pretense that God has called them to minister in another place, as experience abundantly testifies. O ye bewitched men, consider what kind of teachers they are who minister to you. Are they not of those whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame? Phil. 3: 19. Are they not of those who receive the reward of unrighteousness, counting it pleasure to riot in the day time? Are they not spots and blemishes (in the gospel)? Do they not sport themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you, &c.? 2 Pet. 2. Are they not real hirelings, who serve you for wages or for the sake of their belly, and not out of love? John 10. Are they not of those who cry Peace, (and bless you) if you give them something to bite (and permit them to live luxuriantly upon your goods); but who prepare war against him that putteth not into their mouths? Micah 3: 5. Are they not of those who feed themselves, and clothe themselves in your wool, (Ezek. 34,) and make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the border of their garments, love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, greetings in the market, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi; who devour widow's houses, and for a show make long prayers? the same shall receive greater

damnation. Matt. 23. Mark 12. Luke 20: 46, 47.

Ah reader, reflect upon this in the fear of God; for Christ declares, Be ye not called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. Matt. 23: 8. Paul says, I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20.

But what will the hireling and mercenary preachers say to this? Doubtless they will bring in this objection, The scripture says, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn; or, if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things; or, they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 1 Cor. 9.

My answer is, that these passages of scripture ought not to be so flagrantly abused, nor made use of as a cloak of unrighteousness, but should be understood according to their true meaning and import; for they were written that the disciples might perceive the reasonableness of their bearing such love towards their teachers when preaching the

gospel as in return to impart to them of their temporal goods according as necessity may require, supplying them, out of disinterested love, with meat and drink ; for the workman is worthy of his meat (Matt. 10: 10) : and thus they can live of the gospel. For evangelic love inclines their brethren and disciples to provide food and drink for them, and makes them prompt in supplying them with whatsoever they stand in need of, so that they assist in bearing their burdens, and by the exercise of love fulfil the law. Rom. 13: 8.

But as regards the teacher, if he is a teacher from God, it always remains as mentioned above, He has received freely from God, he should freely give ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; neither as being lord over God's heritage, (extorting their money from them, as many do at this day) but being ensamples to the flock, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings ; by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and yet true ; as unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and, behold, we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ;

as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (2 Cor. 6) ; they must be all things to all men ; must be full and yet endure want, high and yet of low estate, and be able to do all things through Christ that strengtheneth them. Samuel, the prophet, called God and the people to witness that he had taken neither gold nor silver, ox nor ass, nor any other thing as a bribe (1 Sam. 12) ; Paul also testifies his integrity in the following passages : Acts 20 : 33, 34. 1 Cor. 4 : 11, 12, ch. 9. 2 Thess. 3 : 7. 8.

This now is the fruit, nature and disposition of a teacher sent from God ; he must go and minister wherever he is sent of God, without making any inquiries about the salary he is to obtain for his service ; for his salary and conversation are in heaven, (Matt. 6 : 20. Phil. 3 : 20) ; his reward is in heaven (Matt. 5 : 12) ; his inheritance is in heaven. 1 Pet. 1 : 4. He does not burden his mind with anxious cares about what he shall eat, or what he shall drink, or what he shall put on, but he casts his care upon him who called him ; for his Father in heaven knoweth that he has need of all these things. Matt. 6. If from christian feelings and brotherly affection there is something administered to his necessities, he receives it as an acceptable contribution, and sends up heartfelt praises to God for the blessing (2 Cor. 9) ; not that he desires the gift from a spirit of cupidity, in order to spend

an easy indolent life, but merely for the relief of his wants; for he knows that it is more blessed, if it can be done, to give unto others, than to receive from them without necessity.

Therefore, my readers, see how deplorably you permit yourselves to be misled by your teachers, who, for their own interest and self gratification, place cushions under your arms and pillows under your heads, leading captive your souls by means of perversions and misrepresentations, so that you consider them true teachers, instructing you aright in the word of God, and know not that you are travelling a wrong course, till I fear it is too late, unless you take the scripture in your own hands, in the fear of God, and learn by the wisdom which descends from on high, the good and acceptable will of the Lord.

Ah, if there were at the apostles' time many who were enemies of the cross of Christ, whose god was their belly, how much more numerous, do you not suppose, such teachers are in our day, when christendom lies in perfect confusion or desolation, nay, is changed into a spiritual Babel. If there were even in the apostolic age false apostles and deceitful workers, who transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, yea, ministers of satan, who transformed themselves as preachers of righteousness, (2 Cor. 11: 13, 14, 15,) how much more abundant are they in our time, when the unclean spirits came out of the mouth of

the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Rev. 16. Awake ye who yet sit in darkness and are hungry, who are drunk with the wine of the whore of Babylon: for the day of her judgment is near at hand. Ah wo then to all who have the mark of the beast, and carry on commerce with the merchants of Babylon, who think that godliness is gain, and for the gratification of their appetites make merchandise of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which on the contrary should be received from every one without money and without price. Is. 55. Ah, I counsel you with Christ Jesus to beware of wolves that come in sheep's clothing, it being easy to distinguish by their fruits what spirit they are children of; for they are thieves and murderers of your souls; they enter in some other way than by Christ, the door; their voice the sheep of Christ do not know, but flee from them; but how few in our day take this to heart! how few look unto Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, except by whom no man can come unto the Father.

VI.

The church of Jesus Christ is not built up and propagated by hereditary succession, as

carnal Israel in the figure, or as the sects at the present time are propagated by virtue of descent, under outward ordinances, destitute of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, but it consists of those who are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These are the branches and members of Christ, that bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, (Gal. 5: 22); who meet their enemies, not with the sword, but with love; who give the cloak also rather than sue and go to law for the coat; who overcome evil with good; who follow Christ and bear his cross, crucifying their own flesh with the affections and desires thereof, walking in self-denial as he walked, and keeping his commandments, as he also kept his Father's commandments. In short, they are living stones built up by the Spirit of Christ, a spiritual house and priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. In such souls consists the church of Christ, but not in carnal men, who walk in the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, who hate and envy, lie and deceive, and live not only in secret but in open sins; which thing prevails to an amazing extent in the so-named christendom, so that a pious person is astonished to think that men, living in such abominations, should

boast of being christians, when it expressly says, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2: 19); whosoever committeth sin, is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning. Now, Paul would not that we should have fellowship with devils; therefore all who desire salvation, go out from the community of such men, and separate yourselves from them; for ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils; or do ye provoke the Lord to jealousy? are ye stronger than he? 1 Cor. 11. For the Lord will not smell in such solemn assemblies, he has no pleasure in their offerings or their supper, he will not hear the noise of their songs and the melody of their viols (Amos 5); yea, when they make many prayers he will not hear them. All the prophets and men of God perceived this by the Spirit of the Lord, and separated themselves from all the strange worship and idolatry of carnal minded Israel, reprovng them on that account; these men we highly extol for their steadfastness. But to do like them is very little countenanced at the present time. In like manner the reformers who departed out of Babylon are held in great admiration; but why do ye speak the praises of them, while you yourselves are sitting at ease in a new but equally great Babylon? The reason is, that

you are destitute of the light which they possessed; for if the same light was spread abroad in your souls, you would see as great a Babylon as the former; you would be no longer able to remain at ease in Babylon, but you would flee out of her, lest you might be made partakers of her punishment. But because the false doctrine or the dark smoke from the bottomless pit has obscured the sun of the gospel or the true doctrine, it is to you strange and incomprehensible; for you have turned away your ears from the truth, and turned unto cunning fables, have heaped unto yourselves teachers having itching ears, (2 Tim. 4: 3,) that you may go in the broad way of a carnal, unrestrained life, not thinking that the end is destruction. For I fear that many of you are so misled by false constructions and delusions, as to think you know and believe the truth, when at the same time you are believing a lie. 2 Thess. 2: 10, 11. Ah, it is high time that every one should awake; for not all who in ill-founded belief say, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that do the will of the Father. They who hear the doctrine of Christ and do it, build upon an immovable rock, which shall stand forever; but all who live after the flesh, must die. For to be carnally minded is death, as has been shown several times already.

VII.

Dear reader, in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, neither baptism nor the Lord's supper, nor any other means, but a new creature. Gal. 6 : 15. This must first be wrought in us by the power of God, before we are qualified to render God a reasonable service. Therefore let every one beware, and suffer not himself to be deceived by such false comforters as persuade you, saying, you are regenerated in baptism, or that the new birth is effected without your knowledge, if you only attend to the outward duties of religion, and more such false consolations. Ah no, they deceive your souls ; rest assured, the new birth is not effected without your being aware of it ; for it is an essential changing of the whole man ; it is a real manifestation of the Son of God in the soul, after we have been beaten, bruised, and broken under the hammer of the law, crucified to our sins in the old man, and mortified and dead in our own power, good works and false righteousness, so that we lie dead before God, as clay in the hand of the potter ; then and not till then will God manifest his Son in us, and quicken us together with him, that we may bring forth fruit no more unto death but unto God, and serve him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Rom. 7. Could these things come to pass without our knowledge ? Ah

no ! for we are compared to a woman in travail ; when her hour is come she suffers great anguish, but after the birth she forgets all her anguish for joy that a man is born into the world. So with us : at the time of the new birth we suffer the anguish of death and judgment on account of our sins ; but afterwards we are filled with joy and consolation on account of the grace of Christ, and the justification of our sins ; so that the joy then overcomes all the tribulation and anguish. This the souls on the day of pentecost experienced, also Paul, the jailer, the eunuch, and Cornelius and those that were with him, as also all those who have been born of God even unto this day, which is evinced by daily experience.

Pious and gentle reader ! since Christ tells us to try the teachers as well as all other men by their fruits, we have a criterion by which we know what spirit they are children of ; for if they are children of God, they are also followers of God ; they execute the commands of God ; they speak, not in soft words to please men, but they try to please God who trieth their hearts. (1 Thess. 2) ; their doctrine is no other than the doctrine of Christ and the apostles ; their walk is in conformity with the walk of the former ; their doctrine is in the power of the spirit, not with words which man's wisdom teaches, but with words which the Holy Spirit teaches ; their household or

church which is entrusted to their care they preserve pure and clean; agreeably to the ordinance of Christ they expel him that doeth evil; them that sin they rebuke before all, that others also may fear; (1 Cor. 5: 2. 2 Thess. 3: 6, 14. 1 Tim. 5: 20,) they are faithful watchmen and good shepherds; they flee not, when the wolf in sheep's clothing enters the flock in order to perplex and dissipate their minds with deceitful words and false doctrine; as the apostles testify in many places; (Gal. 1. Gal. 2: 45. Acts 15. 2 Cor. 10: 10, 11,) they stand, having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; their feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and above all they have taken the shield of faith wherewith they are able to quench all the fiery darts of satan, and overcome the world and all the subtle spirits under heaven; they have living hope as the helmet of salvation which constantly preserves them from disgrace; they have the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, by which they transfix the hearts of the impenitent, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and to the discerning of the thoughts and intents of their hearts; together with all this equipment they send up prayer and supplication unto him who is their strength and their power, for themselves and for all saints; that

they may in all things be conquerors, bearing away the palm of everlasting victory. Eph. 6. Heb. 4: 12. Paul exhorts the faithful Ephesians to put on this armor of God, that they might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. If now all the faithful require this armor in order to insure victory, how much more a teacher; if all christians must enter in by the door into the sheepfold, how much more a teacher; if all christians ought to have the mind that was in Jesus, how much more a teacher who is an ambassador in Christ's stead, and a steward of the mysteries of God. For a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit; that is, an unregenerated teacher cannot bring forth fruit pleasing to God, or conducive to the salvation of men. For not having entered by the door, not having passed from death unto life, he can do nothing but steal, kill and destroy; and even if he has the key of knowledge (that is, a stupendous mind and an enlightened understanding) to the kingdom of God, yet he enters not in himself; and those that would enter in, he prevents (since he prophesies, casts out devils, that is, brings vicious and daring sinners to a more virtuous life, and thinks, on that account, that he does great works in the name of Jesus.) For such a one is considered by the most of people as a true teacher of God; and they pay more

regard to him than to Christ and his doctrine ; his words are more current with such bewitched men than the word of Christ ; what he speaks must be spoken from heaven, as may easily be seen at the present day. Therefore christendom has become like the apostate Jews, whose land was filled with false prophets and faithless shepherds, by whom they suffered themselves to be led, and whose word they believed in preference to the word of the Lord, even though the pen of the scribes was in vain ; for lo, saith the Lord, they have rejected the word of the Lord ; and what wisdom is in them ? Jer. 8 : 8, 9. O ye sons of men, is it not a lamentable circumstance that you do not more carefully consider, and in the fear of God reflect upon the doctrine of Christ, which was brought down from yonder heaven, seeing his words shall stand as judges of us all. O come and look once more in this mirror of his divine discourse ; I would place this divine mirror before you once more, in which, if possible, you might see your shape, and no longer dream of a self-imagined happiness, while salvation is not to be obtained out of Jesus and his doctrine ; for wo unto them who obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear fellow-man, whoever thou art, teacher or layman, examine whether thy soul is made partaker of the eight different blessings, as shown in the first chapter. May Christ call

thee the light of the world and the salt of the earth! Does thy righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees? Is thy hatred changed into love and thy envy into forgiveness? Is thy life pure and chaste? Hast thou plucked out thy carnal eye, so that thou dost not any more covet thy neighbor's house, nor thy neighbor's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's? Art thou able to rejoice no more in the folly of others, but in God alone, the Supreme Good? Is it thy greatest pleasure that thy conversation be with grace, edifying the hearers? Dost thou hold it as a duty incumbent upon thee to swear no oath whatever, but to confirm thy testimony with Yea, yea, and Nay, nay? For whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. Thou dardest no longer resist evil by force; thou dardest not sue and go to law for any temporary possession, knowing that thou hast in heaven a better enduring substance. Hebrews 10: 34. Thou oughtest therefore to give and impart willingly to the poor and the distressed; thou shouldst love not only thy neighbor, but thy enemies also; bless when they curse; pray for them when they despitefully use thee and persecute thee; thou shouldst do thy alms so that the left hand may not know what thy right hand doeth; thou shouldst in secret worship God in spirit and in truth, not uttering with the

mouth what the heart findeth not; thou shouldst fast without being of a sorrowful countenance, like the hypocrites; thou shouldst have thy treasure in heaven and not on earth; the single eye of thy mind must be constantly directed thither, for thou canst not serve two masters, but must cleave to God alone; therefore thou must not charge thy heart with the cares of life, but commit all thy cares unto God; thou must not judge by thy reason without the word and spirit of God; thou shouldst not give holy things to dogs, nor cast thy pearls before swine, but thou shouldst in all things imitate Christ and his doctrine, walk as he set thee an example, love him and keep his commandments. Dear reader, all this thou wilt do if thou hast the spirit of Christ; and his other commandments thou wilt not neglect, such as baptism, the supper, feet washing, and all the rules of the Christian Church, and when thou hast done all these things, thou must confess of thyself thou art an unprofitable servant, thou hast done nothing more than what was thy duty to do.

Dear man, behold thyself, I repeat it, in the above mirror; for it is nothing less to thee than Christ's own precepts. Canst thou here say with the psalmist, The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the

honey comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping them there is great reward. Ps. 19. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Rev. 22: 14. And see now with what a conclusion Christ ends his sermon, where, before he makes the final close, he points out to his disciples by the strait gate and the narrow way, the manner in which they should walk; after this he gives us a faithful warning to beware of false prophets that come in sheep's clothing, or an outward appearance of piety, but within are ravening wolves: by their fruit are we to know them. Their doing great miracles and wonders in his name, is not sufficient grounds for us to consider them as sent from God; we must first be satisfied that they hear the doctrine of Christ and do it. For whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Behold and tremble, ye teachers and builders, who build not upon Christ and his doctrine, but walk in your own opinions, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men: since you have not kept the word of his patience, how will you stand in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Rev. 3: 10. You read, and with carnal ears hear the doctrine of Christ, and yet do not hear it; you see and know by his unheard of miracles, that he is Christ, the Saviour of the world, and yet you see and hear him not: otherwise you would believe and follow him. You say, (like the Jews) We are christians; but Christ may answer, You are not, but rather the synagogue of satan. Rev. 2: 9. For the kingdom and church of Christ is a kingdom of love and peace: as Paul says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God (1 Cor. 11: 16); for where envying and strife is, there is contention and every evil work, and is not the wisdom which descendeth from above, but which is earthly, sensual, devilish. James 3. Real Christians do to one another as they would wish to be done to; no man seeks his own but every man another's wealth (1 Cor. 10: 24); but how little of this virtue is to be seen now among those who style themselves christians. Alas, one finds in almost all

places the very reverse of this; every one has to take heed of his neighbor, and is afraid to trust in any brother, for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders; and they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth (when it conflicts with their own interest): they have taught their tongues to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Ah, their habitation is in the midst of deceit: through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord. Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Jer. 9. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will only revolt more and more. Isaiah 1. Ah, reader, is not this the case? Has not God scourged our land already in various ways, with war, with dry seasons, and especially with sickness and death? But we see as yet no reformation, but rather a backsliding; unrighteousness increases from day to day; pride, dissipation and extravagant living are constantly gaining ground: lies and deceit, fornication and adultery, thefts, murder and manslaughter abound more and more, the turning away to unrighteousness

with lying signs and wonders, becomes constantly greater ; both priests and prophets are deceivers, teaching a false worship ; they cry Peace, peace, when there is no peace. Well may the Lord say, I have often chastened you, but what did it avail ? The wicked children contemn the rod. Ah, a person might prophesy with the prophet and smite his hands together ; for a two-fold punishment shall come, and this wickedness shall at length be revenged (Ezek. 21 : 13, 14) ; unless they repent in sackcloth and ashes, as Nineveh did, give ear unto Christ and follow his instructions : for unless this is done, the fabric of our religion will fall, and we shall see, too late, that our labor is lost, and our end everlasting perdition.

Ah reader, hereby we must try ourselves and all teachers, whether we believe all the words of Christ, and do them, not with our own, but with his strength, in the fear of God, or whether we receive one part and neglect the other, transgressing his commandments by our own traditions, as did the pharisees. Matt. 15 : 3, 6. If this is the case, our worship is sheer hypocrisy ; wherefore Christ says in conclusion, Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, &c. To hear and do is divine wisdom ; to hear and not to do is human folly. To hear aright is not merely to hear with the outward ear but

with the ear of the heart, the doctrine of Christ falling not only on the ear but in the heart, as living seed; at first like a sharp sword that the heart may be pierced as on the day of pentecost, in the same manner that a plow breaks up the ground and makes it ready to receive the seed: then they that gladly received his word, were baptised, it says. Acts 41. A pierced and broken heart receives the word of God gladly, that is, he receives it with the intention of doing it; for he perceives the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart, his commandments pure, enlightening the eyes, &c. Ps. 19. Therefore Christ answered satan, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. 4: 4. Deut. 8: 3. Wisdom 16: 26. This seed continues to grow by faith in a child-like obedience of the word; for grace makes the word fruitful in the soul and brings a man with his sinful affections under the control of the word; the word with grace teaches him to deny himself, take up his cross and follow Christ; grace with the word helps him to accomplish this, bringing all to a glorious consummation. The word of promise is the anchor of the soul; (Heb. 6: 18, 19,) grace is the cable by which through faith the soul is kept fast to the word, so that the heavy storms and mighty waters of temptation, and the violent tempests of hell cannot prevail against nor destroy this

spiritual building; (Is. 43: 2,) for it is founded upon the rock and the immovable word which shall stand unshaken when heaven and earth have passed away. Matt. 24: 35.

Ah reader, observe and try the spirits, whether they are of God; for all pretended holy spirits are not divine spirits; not every one who is able to speak finely of conversion is really converted; a Saul can be annointed of the Lord and receive a new heart, and afterwards despise the word of the Lord and be rejected; (1 Sam. 15,) a Jehu can be zealous against the idolatry of Ahab and Jezebel, and yet take no heed to walk in the law of the Lord with all his heart, and to depart from the sins of Jeroboam: (2 Kings 10: 31,) and so a man can be in part converted and be zealous against gross sins and idolatry, and yet not walk with all his heart in the doctrine of Christ, even as there may be seen at this day great preachers of repentance and conversion, but very little following of Christ and his doctrine, very little of real humility of heart and christian meekness, very little denying of their will and bringing into captivity their reason to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. 10: 5. Ah, what avail such conversions, or what end do they promote? Certainly no other than this, that by their good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple; (Rom. 16: 17, 18,) for they corrupt the word of God, and speak it not

of sincerity (2 Cor. 2: 17); they are the haughty saints whom the Lord will put away. Zeph. 3: 11. O remember, to hear the word of God and not to do it, is a mere building upon sand; and to build upon sand may cost almost as much labor as to build upon a rock; and at last, when all is finished, there is nothing done. The foolish virgins went out to meet the bridegroom, they abandoned their carnal rest and security, they desired to go in with Christ to the wedding, they carried their lamps as well as the wise, they made outward confession of Christ, they were virgins handsomely adorned with external piety, they slept sweetly and securely, not being the least apprehensive of missing the feast. But, lo, when the bridegroom came, they, for the first time, discovered their folly; their lamps went out! They desired oil of the wise, but they obtained it not; the door was closed against them. They called out in vain, Lord, Lord, open unto us! But he answered, Whence are ye? I know you not. Matt. 25. Oh remember, these virgins might just as well have staid at home, all their labor and pains were lost. Now, in this are represented such half converted men as have in part come from darkness to light, but have not entirely turned from the power of satan to God, and in consequence have not received the gift of the Holy Spirit, who would guide them into all truth, and bring

into their remembrance all things whatsoever Christ has said. John 14: 26. John 16: 13.

Therefore, awake, awake, repent and reform, lay hold on Christ and follow his doctrine; be no longer led by your blind guides, lest you fall with them into the ditch; they daub the wall with untempered mortar, (Ezek. 13,) saying, Here is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, or in other words the church of the Lord, which has stood for many years. Ah, what advantage was it to Israel, when they had filled Jerusalem with their sins, that the name of the Lord had dwelt there in former times? Behold the once magnificent city has become a pile of stones! In like manner what advantage will it be to you that the glory of the Lord dwelt, in former times, in the midst of your churches, if you have filled them with your sins, and go now in the broad way of the flesh, whose end is destruction? O how deplorably have almost all sects and denominations turned away from apostolic love! How widely have they departed from their primitive regulations! Then were Jews and gentiles baptised by the same spirit into one body, and were all of them one fold and one shepherd (1 Cor. 12: 13. John 10: 16); but now there are many different folds and shepherds, many different opinions and rules of faith. Some maintain, as articles of their creed, infant baptism, the employment of an

oath, wars, and going to law, and other things directly contrary to the sound doctrine of Christ: others, who do not approve of these things, and style themselves defenceless, take nevertheless the liberty of suing, arbitrating and going to law about their temporal goods. Paul says, There is utterly a fault among you, because you go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? 1 Cor. 6. Remember, that all these things are in direct contrariety to the spirit and doctrine of Christ, as I have plainly shown in the third chapter of this book. But, oh how lamentable is it that almost the whole of the so named christendom is held in captivity under this error, (no allusion to those who are free); the vail of Moses is upon their hearts in the reading of the old testament, which vail is done away in Christ; nevertheless when they shall turn to the Lord the vail shall be taken away. 2 Cor. 3.

O teachers, teachers, who, being set as watchmen over the people, cry not aloud, nor warn them against these things! ah, how deplorably you deceive their souls! How will you stand when you shall give an account of the souls you have instructed? Heb. 13: 17. Oh, it will then be of no avail to appeal to the long standing and established usages of the church; the question will be, Hast thou put to usury the word of my gospel, and been

faithful to thy trust? O will any delinquent be able at that time to answer Christ? Nay, the dumbness of conscious guilt will be imposed upon him, and he will be thrust down to hell in chains of everlasting darkness.

O ye men, what are your designs? Behold, the church of Christ is not propagated by blood, nor by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man; but whosoever are born of God, to them Christ gives power to become the children of God; the same are members of his body, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. John 1: 12, 13. Eph. 5: 30. Such are the living stones which are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 2: 5.

But you make christians by the will of man; you build your churches and propagate them by virtue of descent. As the Jewish priests, &c. made Jews by outward circumcision, so you make christians by outward baptism; the Jews and proselytes made by the former were children of hell; the christians made by you in the manner mentioned, are likewise nothing less than children of the bottomless pit, (unless they obtain another and a heavenly birth) for their fruits show plainly that the tongues and conversation of the greatest part are set on fire of hell. James 3: 6. For take a view of and consider the visible fruits of your baptised members, do

they not live almost all of them in pride, spite, maliciousness, vanity, lies, deceit, rioting, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, (in addition public houses of shame are kept, to satisfy their devilish lusts); dancing, playing, and all kinds of licentiousness and works of the devil, together with cursing, swearing and blasphemy; when it is evident that all who commit such things to greater or less extent, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and not only they who do such deeds, but they also who take pleasure in them that do them. Romans 1.

You administer the sacrament to such carnal men, if they will not receive it at your hands, and comfort them with the peace of the Lord as members of Christ. O ye despisers of the word of God, who set at nought the injunctions of the Holy Spirit, Put away from yourselves the wicked person; withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly (1 Cor. 5: 13. 2 Thesa. 3: 6); have no company with him, that he may be ashamed (verse 14); have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. Eph. 5: 11, 12. But no, in your human wisdom you consider such injunctions as folly, your school divinity has exalted you above Christ and the apostles; if one consider the thing properly, you es-

teem his word as a fable and treat it according to your own sentiments; ye teach for filthy lucre; you seek the wool and not the souls; you have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam. 2 Pet. 2. But I say, if you have not entered in at the right door yourselves, how can you bring in other men? If you are unfruitful and corrupt trees, how is it possible for you to bring forth good fruit? Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Ah no! neither can you bring forth good fruit. Oh, reflect and be sober this once. If war breaks out, you are the instruments that incite your self-fashioned Christians against similar Christians to deeds of death and bloodshed; you urge them on to the field of slaughter as though it was a holy cause to fight for their country, and, supported by such flattering consolation, they march forth more furious than the midnight wolves; and with a ferocity more terrible, and a cruelty more exquisite than that of wild beasts, they fall upon their christian foes, kill, mangle, and destroy; and this is called a christian proceeding! Oh, be ashamed in the presence of God and his angels, that you style yourselves christians; for the angels from heaven exclaimed, at the nativity of the Lord Jesus, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. Luke 2: 14. Oh, I repeat it, be ashamed to represent your-

selves as apostles of Christ and teachers of righteousness, which you are not, but rather such beings as were observed by John, when he saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, and are spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, (by your missionary societies) to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Rev. 13: 14. You compass land and water to make christians and christian proselytes; and when you have made them, if they follow your example, are they a whit better than they were before? Ah, I am afraid not; for we find in publications that there is frequently more fidelity and probity among them than among the so named christians.

If now for example the missionaries should explain to the heathens this text in which Christ says, This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15: 12, 13); or as John says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he (Christ) laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 1 John 3: 16.

What would the heathens naturally say to this? Might they not reply, You preach us

things you do not do yourselves; you lay burdens on our shoulders which you do not touch with one of your fingers. You hypocrites, where is the fruit of your preaching? For do we not see and hear that you are constantly destroying one another by variance, war, and bloodshed; one christian monarchy (as you call them) oppresses another, in order to further her own interest? Where then does one christian out of love to another lay down his life for him, which you say a christian is bound by love to do? Now one or the other of these conclusions incontestably follows: you either preach lies to us, or if you tell us the truth, you deny the doctrine of Christ your head, and are not true ministers sent by him. And again, if they were to explain this passage, He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3: 14, 15.

What would the heathen say to this? Would he not reply: You say, Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer. But you do not only hate one another, but persecute, kill and destroy, lay waste cities and countries, wherefore your own words condemn you; you declare you have no hopes of eternal life, and yet you give yourselves trouble to make us such christians as you are. What will it profit us, seeing we have

in such christianity as little promise of a future life as we have in our present state, in which (as you say) we have none.

Now would not such a pretended apostle of Christ be dumb in the presence of a sagacious heathen, and be convinced in his conscience that he could not in truth make any objection? But why do I say conscience! Had they an awakened conscience, they had long since abandoned their false doctrine: but the unclean spirits came out of their mouths like frogs, they hop from one passage of scripture to another; if they cannot support their doctrine by the gospel of Jesus Christ, they hop to the written law, and take for example the old Jewish warriors to serve as a pretext with which they set off and embellish their cause; and working such miracles, they go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. For do they not fight against him, and gather together the whole world in battle against God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent? For God spake by the mouth of Moses, saying, I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it

of him. Deut. 18. In like manner the voice spoke out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him. Matt. 17: 5. The written law of Moses, the outward warfare and conquest of Canaan, were merely types and shadows of the spiritual law, the spiritual warfare, and the spiritual conquest of the everlasting inheritance through Christ Jesus, for the body itself is of Christ. Col. 2: 17. Heb. 8: 5. Heb. 10: 1. Here men fight no longer with carnal weapons, but with the spiritual weapons of warfare they pull down strong holds, cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, (2 Cor. 10: 4, 5,) as has been frequently and clearly shown in this book.

Well now, ye spiritually blind and dumb watchmen; awake and be sober; cease to fight against the Almighty, for you shall surely fail when he comes to require the blood of your hearers at your hands. O think of the everlasting fire of hell threatened in numerous passages of the holy scriptures against all false teachers and unfaithful shepherds: rely not upon your extensive mental acquirements; neither depend upon the wisdom of man; for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 1 Cor. 1. Wherefore Christ also thanked his heavenly Father because he had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes. Matt. 11. For not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. 1 Cor. 1.

Dear reader, think not that I am alone in my testimony against these things. O no, I could adduce numerous examples of the primitive christians who testify the very same thing; as, for instance, one writer says, A christian does not enter into a lawsuit with those who deprive him of his own: Christ has commanded us rather to forsake the things which occasion disputes, and thus be free from all contention. A christian should

see that he avoids disputes, even at the risk of personal loss. The way is rendered much narrower since the advent of the Lord Jesus, so that men are bound to abandon all contention and altercation.

But the ground of avoidance with them, as regards suing and going to law, was the denial of the world, in as much as from a reliance upon the care and goodness of the Lord, they willingly resigned whatsoever the adverse party were unwilling to yield them, and they esteemed the internal tranquility of their souls and the preservation of peace with their neighbor above all the goods, pleasures and honors of this present world. Wherefore this was their resolution, Whosoever is not afraid to lose his own, the same does not take it hard to impart something to others; otherwise how could he who has two coats, give one of them to a poor person, unless his heart was so disposed that when a person takes away his coat, he could give him his cloak also? If our minds were not thus disposed, we would perish along with the transitory things of life; for what have we that is not perishable? [Arnold's Abbildung der ersten Christen, 2ter Theil, 5tes Buch, Seite 18.]

In the same book we further see, that the primitive christians declared their confession before the pagans, and rejected warfare and a military life. One of them, writing to a

soldier, says, There is nothing we can or should prefer to him who is the true Lord and the eternal Emperor; but if we have greater love for this world and for the emperor than for Christ, we shall not hereafter come to Christ, but be brought to hell, in which the affairs of the lords of this world are managed. Therefore love no longer this world and your military life, since every one who wages war with the sword, is a minister of death; but whosoever sheds his own or other men's blood, the same shall receive the fruit of his wages; for if he is slain, he is guilty of his own death, or if he kills another, he is guilty of this sin, &c. [Arnold's Ab-bildung, 2ter Theil, 5tes Buch, 6tes Cap. Seite 42.]

In like manner the Waldenses were, in their doctrine, entirely opposed to the employment of an oath, the taking of vengeance, and the waging of war; they also denied the propriety of going to law; nay, they went so far as to confess that no judge who wishes to be a christian, can pass sentence of death upon any man, not even upon a malefactor. [Martyrer-Spiegel, 1ster Theil, Seite 223, u. s. w.]

We find further, in relation to the article of war or defence, that the primitive Lutherans, who in the beginning were of the same opinion with the Reformed Calvinists and the Zuinglians, agreed with us in the belief

that it does not become a christian to wage war or stand up in his own defence, among whom; in the first place (says the writer) we quote Andrew Carlstadt, who, in a book entitled, 'Should men forgive injuries and offences?' (printed at Zurich A. D. 1524) writes thus concerning defence: We must not suffer ourselves to be misled by the exprobration that war is a punishment of God; therefore there must always exist some one to carry on war against others. (Also) men under the old testament dispensation carried on war, &c.

In answer to the first, hear what Christ says, Matt. 18. It must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh!—Thus some meriting the inclemency of God, he punishes and torments them with war; but wo to him who shall wage war against them, for he (namely God) punishes the wicked through the instrumentality of the wicked.

In reply to the second, The children of Israel carried on war either against the wicked nations who opposed them in their journey to the promised land, or against such as would not suffer them to dwell in peace after their arrival; all which is typical of the war which we, at present, in Christ, as new and regenerated men, are constrained to carry on with or against all vice and unbelief.

Soon after he writes thus: They further object saying, Those who will not comply with the law, must be compelled by weapons and force, &c.

Answer: To speak properly and christian-like upon the subject, war does not become us in any possible way. It is our duty, in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, to pray for those who speak all manner of evil of us and consider us as fools; nay when they smite us upon one cheek we should turn the other also; then we shall be children of the Most High. [So much for Carlstadt.]

From Carlstadt the writer proceeds to Luther, and says, In a small work printed at Wittenberg, A. D. 1520, Luther assigns the reason for his burning the pope's books, which was, as appears from the 22d article, his teaching, that it is right for a christian to defend himself against force by force, in contrariety to the saying of Christ. Matt. 5. Whosoever taketh away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

In another small work printed also at Wittenberg, it appears, among other articles, that he (Luther) taught, that the words of Christ. Matt. 5. Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And Rom. 12. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves—are not a counsel which a person

may or may not comply with at his option, but one which it is incumbent upon us to observe, &c.

Also, christians are forbidden to take their cause to court. Also, as a christian is not permitted to place his affections upon worldly goods, so neither is he permitted to take an oath in regard to them.

In short, it is proved that Luther was opposed for a considerable length of time, both by his mouth and his pen, to a resistance or defence, till finally, seduced from the doctrine of truth, he adopted another belief. [Sleydanus testifies the same, in Book 8, Page 561. See the oldest editions. History of the Martyrs, 2d part, pages 591 and 592.]

Dear reader, there might be many more witnesses produced from among the Martyrs of Jesus Christ, who rejected infant baptism, the employment of oaths, bearing the sword, together with suing and going to law, and this in all ages or centuries. But what would it avail? For if men believe not the plain and express words of Christ, nor the testimony of the Holy Spirit given by the apostles, how could they believe mine or other men's testimony? Ah no! The god of this world has hardened and blinded their unbelieving minds, so that they see not the clear light of the gospel of Jesus. They take pleasure in the luxury of life, and travel securely in the commodious path of the flesh, going on in

the broad road that leadeth to everlasting perdition.

The only reason is this, that there have been from the time of Christ to the present but very few who received and lived up to this true abrenunciation, it being directly contrary to the nature of man; therefore they are looked upon as foolish persons by the great multitudes of teachers and common people, not considering the declaration of Christ, that strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it.

Nevertheless, the doctrine which I have propounded to you in this little book, shall stand for ever, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, though it may be opposed by many, and be considered by the witty and the learned as fanaticism; for the word of the cross, and of true self-denial, is to them sheer foolishness, but to us who believe and walk therein, it is the power of salvation. 1 Cor. 1.

O beloved fellow travellers to eternity! I have in my simplicity declared nothing unto you in this book, but Jesus Christ and him crucified, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the head of all christians, the true High Priest, the long promised Prophet and true Teacher of righteousness, whom we should hear and follow, and whose cross we should bear as long as we sojourn

here. If like all the disciples of Jesus I shall now and then be despised, reviled and calumniated by many people, and be considered as a seductive spirit, enthusiast, and deceiver of the people, it matters not ; for nothing else can be expected : whosoever confesses Christ before an adulterous generation, must endure hatred ; which is abundantly shown and confirmed by the example of all candid confessors of the truth. Oh, the heavenly crown of everlasting life will make rich and abundant amends to me and to all candid confessors and followers of Jesus Christ.

Finally, may the Lord fulfil, in every pious reader, that for which I earnestly groan to God, to whose saving grace and divine wisdom I commend all men through Jesus Christ, highly exalted in time and eternity, Amen. Yea, Amen, Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER TENTH.

An exhortation to my beloved Brethren and Sisters in Christ Jesus, for the encouragement and edification of their souls; in which are brought into view the love of God; and its nature and disposition, and its operation on the souls that possess it.

1. My highly esteemed and dearly beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, who are called of God with me to the same hope of our vocation, as one body and one spirit, by the bond of love which God has richly shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit; I cannot, under the influence of this love, forbear writing somewhat to you, by way of remembrance, that you may all peruse this book in sound meditation, and view yourselves therein, and if any find himself too far from the mark, that he may be reminded anew to give more heed to his calling, lest any should backslide and grow cold in love towards God; for the greatest of all the commandments is this, Hear, O Israel, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and this is like unto it, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Mark 12. Oh, when we love God above all things as the Supreme Good, and cleave to him alone, then we seek for nothing more in the creatures, or in him

who is inferior to God ; because God is sufficient for us. For all creation is nothing less than a display of his almighty power and wisdom ; everything on earth that our eyes can any where behold, bears witness to his glory, which serves as a means to unite us more and more in love with him, making us sensible of his great love towards us in all his gifts which he bestows upon us, both as respects the body and the soul.

2. As regards the body, we see that he exercises universal love towards all men, doing good as well to the wicked as the godly ; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Matt. 5: 45. Yea, he endureth with much long suffering the vessels of wrath, which (in consequence of their obstinacy and ungodly works) are fitted to destruction. Rom. 2: 5. Rom. 9: 22.

3. In relation to the soul, we observe his universal love extended to every man ; for Christ, the true light, is come to light every man that cometh into the world (John 1) ; he is not come to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3) ; he would willingly gather all together under the wings of his mercy, as a hen doth her brood, but they will not ; therefore he does not impart to them the treasure of his hidden and heavenly love, but to those only who receive him and believe in his name, to whom he gives power to become

the children of God. John 1. And this state of adoption, which such obtain through Christ, is the birth of God; that is, they are made partakers of the divine nature, (2 Pet. 1, 4,) and rendered conformable to Christ, as the branch possesses the same properties with the vine, only with this difference, that they receive of his fulness, and grace for grace. John 1: 16.

4. Therefore, my dearly beloved brethren, and sisters, let us constantly reflect upon this love, which God has by his exceeding grace imparted to our souls; this meditation will excite love and gratitude towards him, so that we will gladly take up his cross, and follow in all which he has commanded us. For love is the fulfilling of the law, (Rom. 13: 8,) because in that which love doeth, there is no constraint, and where there is no constraint there is no law, and where there is no law there is neither servitude nor fear; for perfect love casteth out fear. 1 John 4: 18. Therefore through this love we are children, and, by this love and the Spirit of Christ, we cry Abba Father! And as we know God to be our Father and Preserver, we trust in him entirely and exclusively; if he chastens us we faint not, because we know that thereby we obtain sanctification; if he strips and denudes us, and hides his countenance from us for a while, we do not sink down into servile fear and unbelief; for his design is only to

make a trial of our love. We therefor abide in faith till it shall please him again to visit and comfort us, well knowing that he has promised, He will never leave us nor forsake us. Heb. 13: 5.

5. Ah, this love is a glorious unction! all which it teaches us is right; for it is God, and God is love, and whosoever abideth in love, abideth in God, and God in him. Love teaches us, by Christ in the inner man, as well as in the word, that it is our duty when a person strikes us on one cheek, to turn the other also; and, if any man sues us at the law and takes away our coat, not to withhold from him our cloak. Love enjoins upon us to love these our enemies; it instructs us to pray for them and do them good; for by this love we have a vision quite different from nature, we possess a sense of feeling entirely new, so that we are not exasperated against such as inflict evil upon us; for we look further than to man, knowing with Christ that he can have no power except it be given him from above (John 19: 11); for not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without our Father, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. Matt. 10: 29, 30.

6. Of this Job was well aware, for he regarded not, with a revengeful eye, the Arabians who took away his asses and his oxen when they were ploughing, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; nor the

Chaldeans who took away his camels and slew his servants; but he looked to God himself who gave satan power to lay hands upon him, and knew that these men served merely as the instruments of his temptation. Therefore he said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Job 1. By these words he gave to understand that he had nothing in the world but what God had given him; neither could he lose any thing, for God only took away his own, or gave satan and his instruments the power of taking it away.

7. We perceive also, my brethren, that Christ did not look upon the men in his sufferings as men who did such things by their own ability, but he knew that it was the time and power of darkness which his Father had appointed him, and that these men were only instruments in the hands of the devil to fulfil the predetermined counsel of God. Therefore he felt for them a deep compassion and prayed for them. In like manner love teaches us to pray in heartfelt commiseration for our vilest enemies; for love, or charity, suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the

truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 1 Cor. 13. Love worketh no ill to its neighbor, it possesses a disposition so benignant, and a virtue so efficacious, that it gives us the like mind that was in Jesus, rendering us merciful, even as our Father in heaven is also merciful (Luke 6 : 36) ; so that we willingly impart and do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith. Gal. 6 : 10. Ah yes, love renders all things light which to the old man are grievous and unpleasant, nay intolerable ; for it beareth all things, and teaches us that all crosses, tribulations, trials, and worldly losses serve for the best. We, therefore, endure all things, and become quite nothing in the outward man ; when men revile, calumniate and persecute us, and do us injuries, either in regard to person or property, we rejoice in love ; for it is to us an unbounded consolation and a treasure which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and which thieves can not break through and steal. Yea, under the influence of this love the Hebrews took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Heb. 10 : 34. Under the influence of this love a man forsakes father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, (as regards the works of the flesh) and even his own life ; for love knows no man after the flesh ; is without dissimulation, hates

the evil and cleaves to the good ; it fleeth the transitory pleasure of the world, avoids every appearance of evil, shuns idolatry and the doctrines of men, and abandons the profligate and the licentious ; it abides only in those who abide in it, that is in God, and keep his commandments ; for love consists in keeping the commandments of God, and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5 : 2, 3. Love does all things willingly and without constraint, and therefore does not call the word of the Lord a burden. Jer. 23.

8. O dearly beloved in the Lord, examine carefully whether this love to God is always the motive of your keeping the commandments of Christ. For, as an instance, if a person defrauds you, or endeavors by craft and cunning to appropriate your property to his own use, perhaps for the reason that we are not at liberty, in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, to employ force against him, how do you stand affected ? For this is a severe trial for our human nature ; and if this exercises too great an influence over us, we indulge bad feelings towards him who injures us ; and though, in consequence of the commandment, we do not intend any thing against him, yet it is a constraint, or a grievous burden, which we are compelled to bear ; neither can we, as though we were actuated by the impulse of love, offer up our heartfelt supplications in his behalf ; for genuine

charity is wanting, and we possess merely a bare knowledge of the doctrine of Christ, which will avail us nothing, according to the declaration of Paul. 1 Cor. 13.

9. But if true charity exerts its benign influence within us, then none of these things will press upon us as grievous burdens; we bear them willingly, and commit all things to him who judgeth righteously, and pity such men from our hearts that they suffer themselves to be employed as instruments in the devil's hands to perpetrate such flagrant injustice; for if a man is not faithful in temporal goods, who will commit to his trust the true riches. Luke 16 : 10, 11. O wo to their souls ! for they lay up a treasure which tends to their everlasting destruction, unless they repent. Oh how can love be otherwise than filled with commiseration for such men ? How can charity refrain from offering up an ardent prayer to God that he may enlighten their souls, when we reflect that the god of this world has hardened and blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine upon them ? Alas, they walk in darkness, not knowing whither they go; they are studious of doing injuries, and know not that the Lord will, in his season, take vengeance upon all such things.

10. O thou perverted and falsely esteemed christendom ! how do thy open fruits bear witness to the fact, that you have no less

claim to any thing than to the love of God! You quarrel and contend, you sue and go to law, you commit wrongs and outrages one against another, you can scarcely with a free will forego a few dollars for Christ's sake, not to say any thing of your life and sinful nature, and yet you would wish to cover all with the appearance of the gospel as though it was a righteous cause!

11. O teachers and blind guides! who, not possessing the love of God, presume yourselves to be teachers of the blind and a light to those who are in darkness, (Rom. 2,) while you show plainly that yourselves are in darkness; for if you possessed the true light, it would be manifested in your doctrine and conversation. Influenced by love, you would be impelled in your instructions to testify openly and energetically against all things interdicted by Christ and his apostles, and would be constrained to teach all things whatsoever he has commanded you. Matt. 23. In your walk you would withdraw yourselves from every one who teaches otherwise and consents not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness. 1 Tim. 6: 3 to 5. 2 Tim. 3: 5. For as much as this is not found in you, but rather the contrary, by which the people are kept in blindness and amused with lies; therefore be not surprised that we cannot hear

your preaching, or that we avoid you ; for the holy scripture and our own conscience will not allow us. O that your eyes may be opened before it is too late ! and may you yet escape the dreadful woes pronounced in the holy scriptures against all unfaithful shepherds.

12. My dearly beloved brethren and sisters, and all awakened souls, since we see by the word and grace of the Lord how miserably great the apostacy from God is in our time, and perceive that men turn away from the truth and turn to cunning fables ; the word of God is corrupted and the opinions of men advocated, as was the case with backsliding Israel and Judah under the old testament dispensation : therefore I exhort you with Paul, that you be not beguiled by those, who in voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intrude into those things, which they have not seen (in a true light,) vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds, and not holding the head (Christ and his doctrine.) Col 2. For by this we easily know them, if they follow not Christ in all things, and teach whatsoever he taught. For true teachers are ambassadors in Christ's stead, executing his commission, and keeping his commandments, even as he kept his Father's commandments ; for he has assigned his kingdom unto us, as it was allotted unto him by his Father : he is the Master, and we the servants and disci-

ples; wherefore it behooves us not to rule over him, but to be obedient in all things. O, if they had the pure love of God, the doctrine of Christ would be written in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, who would bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever Christ has said, (John 14,) so that they might neither add nor diminish.

13. O my dear brethren! influenced by love, my heart often pains me that the godly cease and the faithful fail from among the children of men, and that with flattering lips and a double heart so many say, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us? Ps. 12. They take the covenant into their mouth, yet they hate instruction and cast the words of the lord behind them. Ps. 50. O thou Eternal Love! thou didst provide for us before the world began; for thou sawest, in thy omniscience, that we would fall and be ruined, and that besides thee there was no help at hand to redeem and set us free; then didst thou, O Divine Goodness, purpose and determine in thyself to redeem us, without our aid, purely out of free grace through Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent as the Saviour of mankind, having put the words into his mouth concerning what he should do and what he should speak; and having in this thing both manifested and performed thy will, O God, he gave his life a sacrifice, in order to com-

ply with the demands of thy righteousness, and restored that which he had not taken away; and thus he sealed his testament with his death and blood, so that it remains unchanged and immovable, and thereby made peace through the blood of the cross, having taken away the enmity that was between us and thee, O God, so that we have free access through him to draw nigh unto thee in faith, and are enabled by him, if we follow the drawings of thy grace, to call upon thee as Abba Father; but O God, notwithstanding thou hast borne such unparalleled love towards us and still bearest, yet there is very little love manifested towards thee, there are very few who know thee!

14. But O ye souls, who have the knowledge of this love, and with me have been made partakers of it; let us abide constantly in this child-like love, edifying one another in singleness of heart, each loving the other as himself; so that if one or another should be overtaken in a fault, we, who are spiritual, may restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. Gal. 6: 1. For love is long suffering; he acts not rashly and inconsiderately towards his weak brother: he searches and examines whether the fault was committed deliberately or through precipitancy; if it was committed through inadvertency, he reproves him in a friendly manner, and kindly exhorts

him that he shall be right sensible of his fault, and shall confess it before God and men, and draw nigh to Christ in faith, who is ever ready to pardon; this will be to him as an excellent oil upon his head, (Ps. 141: 5,) and he shall be ransomed by love.

15. If he has sinned deliberately and strives to justify or palliate his crime, then love assumes a sterner countenance and reproves him sharply, for he is possessed of salt; though his words are expressive of kindness, yet they are piercing, and leave behind them a wound in an impure heart, so that it may have the more speedy recourse to its physician in order to be healed, if it is not totally or obstinately hardened against the chastening of love. Also, upon some love has compassion, making a difference; and others it saves with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, (Jude; verses 22, 23,) so that it spares not the person who is punishable.

16. Love teaches us also to use hospitality one to another, without grudging (Pet. 4: 9); for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Heb. 13: 2. Love opens the understanding and enlarges the mind; not by carnal wisdom, but by heavenly wisdom it enables us more and more to acknowledge God in his depth, height, length and breadth; it gives us to taste the sweetness of the gospel and the power, and the glory of the world to

come. [I write this from experience and not from mere knowledge.] All other gifts of grace are good, if love joins and co-operates with them; but love is the chief and greatest gift. Faith is an excellent gift, but without the spirit and without love it is dead; but if love co-operates with faith, giving it efficacy, then is faith rendered powerful; for by faith we are able to overcome the world, (1 John 5: 4, 5,) and to quench all the fiery darts of satan. Eph. 6. To speak with the tongues of men and angels, to have the gift of prophesy, to possess all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, are excellent gifts; but without the co-operation of charity they are nothing worth; if love co-operates with the gifts, they are rendered fruitful and efficacious, and much good can be done among men for the advancement of their salvation.

17. Gifts and knowledge without charity puff up and are nourishment for self; but charity edifies, (1 Cor. 8: 1,) that is, it purifies the heart from all self and selfish principles, and renders us little in our own eyes, so that we honor God through love, and cleave to him alone.

18. Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; therefore we should not value ourselves or be puffed up on account of our possessing

gifts or great knowledge; for we know but in part, and we prophesy but in part: there is no perfection therein; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. In this Paul intimates plainly, that if, in consequence of great revelations, we arrive at extensive knowledge in this life yet we have no reason to boast, inasmuch as all this shall vanish away in death, and is but piece-work in comparison of that which is obtained in the perfection of the world to come. Wherefore he says further of himself, that though he was no longer a child in knowledge, but had grown by great knowledge and revelations to the stature of a man in Christ, and so had laid aside childish things, yet in this earthly tabernacle he saw with others through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Now, says he, I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. But this he gives us to understand, that in the midst of all his extensive knowledge, he did not know God in the perfection of his attributes, as God knew him; but he believes confidently that when God shall raise him from the dead, and change his vile body that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, then he shall know God in his glorious and majestic perfection, even as he then was also known of God.

19. This accords with what John says, Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and

it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3: 2. In like manner Christ says in his prayer, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me. John 17: 24.

20. Brethren, from this we have great reason to humble ourselves before God; for we see that even if we possess all gifts and all knowledge, when we weigh ourselves with God, we must confess that we are of ourselves unqualified for any good work; but that our sufficiency is of God, and being of God, we have nothing to boast of but the grace of our God in Christ Jesus; through the medium of which grace we see God here in the Spirit, but hereafter face to face. Therefore we groan while in this tabernacle, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked, says Paul. 2 Cor. 5. For so long as we abide in this tabernacle we cannot see God in his consummate glory. Moses besought the Lord once to this effect, but he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. Ex. 33: 20. For as much then as we cannot, in this earthly tabernacle, have a perfect view of the fulness of God, let us possess our souls in patience, and have our lamps burning.

that when the bridegroom comes, we may enter with him into his eternal glory.

21. For though prophecy, knowledge and tongues shall cease, yet there abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. That is, in death the gifts cease and vanish away, and the soul possesses them no more after its separation from the body; but faith, hope and charity still remain; for while here, the sanctified soul lives in faith, hope and charity (and not in knowledge); but charity, as the best gift, must actuate faith and quicken hope, and in this manner being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Rom. 5: 1,) and our hope maketh us not ashamed. Verse 5. In this faith, hope and charity the soul rests in her bed from death to the last judgment, (Is. 57: 2,) as it was promised to Daniel, saying, Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days. Dan. 12: 13. But when the last enemy is destroyed, namely death, and the resurrection of the dead is past, and Christ, having separated the sheep from the goats, shall say to the righteous, Come ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world; then faith and hope shall cease, for they have obtained what they believed and hoped for; but charity remains, for it is God, and God is love,

and in it we are glorified in God, fashioned like him, and see him, as he is, in the full brilliancy of glory and in the essence of consummate love, so that God may be all in all.

22. Dearly beloved in the Lord, it has pleased God at sundry times to manifest to certain of the faithful a portion of his glory, even while they remained in this earthly tabernacle; among them we may enumerate Isaiah, (chap. 6,) Ezekiel, (chap. 1 and 3) and Daniel, (chap. 7) also Peter, John, and James in the mountain, (Mark 9) Paul in paradise, (2 Cor. 12) John in his revelations, and Stephen as he was stoned (Acts 7); and I, as the least among the members of Christ, have also, by the grace of God, had a slight view, in the spirit, of the excellence of this heavenly glory; and the exquisite love and extatic joy which I experienced in the contemplation of the glory of God in Christ Jesus are far beyond the power of language to express. God alone be praised.

23. Brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, and dearly beloved in God! forasmuch as we know that we shall inherit an unchanging kingdom, a kingdom of glory and everlasting joy, in which there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, but unceasing love; a kingdom in which all the children of God shall shine like the sun in the firmament, and all tears (which they wept in this earthly tabernacle) shall be wiped away;

they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters (Rev. 7); yea, they shall stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and shall sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints: who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! for thou only art holy. Rev. 15. Ah, this is the blessed rest which is promised to the people of God, a rest that cannot be disturbed, a rest like unto the rest of God; for God rests in himself from all his works; they likewise rest in God from all their labor and all their works. Heb. 4: 9, 10. Rev. 14: 13. Therefore awake, all ye, who have become drowsy and inactive in the way of salvation, awake, strengthen the weary hands, and support the feeble knees, take sure steps, lest you let slip the opportunity of entering into this rest; for he that cometh will come soon, and his reward is with him; and he will render unto every man according to the deeds done in the body.

24. Dearly beloved in the Lord, since God has chosen us before the foundation of the world, in Christ Jesus, to his everlasting

kingdom and his glorious rest, O let us take heed in making our calling and election sure, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left; though our adversary the devil, together with all his servants and followers, may set themselves in array against us, yet the victory is sure; for the Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered, and as he has conquered, so also shall we conquer. Therefore be undaunted, and despair not, for he is with us in the fight; look unto him as the author and finisher of your faith, and do as he instructs you; break the empty pitchers of your humanity, blow the trumpet of the word of God, and hold by you the lamp of the Holy Spirit, and cry, The sword of the Lord and Christ! Then will the camp of Midian be taken, and our enemies shall perish with their own swords. Judges 7. O ye despondent and inactive souls, who are afraid to move forward in the combat, take courage and consider that if God is with us, who can be against us, (Rom. 8: 31,) and no man will harm us, if we be followers of that which is good, and if we suffer for righteousness sake, happy are we. We should not, therefore, be afraid of the terror of our enemies, neither should we be troubled; but rather sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, (1 Pet. 3,) and fear him alone; for he has power not only to destroy the body, but also to cast the soul into hell. All saints from

the beginning have kept these things in view, and were thereby so filled with joy in their sufferings, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor any other creature, was able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; for love is strong as death and jealous as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most violent flame: many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned. Solomon's Song 8.

25. Hearken, therefore, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him; for he that loveth thee is the fairest among the children of men, grace is poured upon his lips, he loveth righteousness and hateth wickedness. Ps. 45. Therefore walk before him gently and keep thy garments clean; for though in the eyes of the world thou art black, (Sol. Song 1: 5,) yet art thou comely, in that thou art intrinsically magnificent, being adorned with jewels of gold. Therefore thy Bridegroom sayeth unto thee, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away: for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, (the fruits of the new birth blossom and break

forth in our land) the voice of the turtle (namely the Spirit of God) is heard in many places, the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, the vine with the tender grape giveth a good smell, his branches spread themselves abroad, and the fruits of truth appear to the view. O thou spiritual Jerusalem, thou dwelling place of the Most High, I wish thee joy; may all be happy who love thee: peace be in thy walls and rejoicing in thy palaces. O ye ministers of the word, ye threescore valiant men of the valiant of Israel, who are about the bed of the Spiritual Solomon: let us hold our swords and be ready for war, because of fear in the night (Song of Sol. 3); let us say with the prophet, For Zion's sake will we not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake we will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, (Is. 62: 1,) and she be established and made a praise in the earth. Verse 7. O thou Bridegroom of our souls! draw us and we follow thee; bring us into thy chamber, that we may rejoice with thee, and be filled with gladness; we esteem thy love more highly than wine, because we have fallen in love with thee, O thou fairest among the sons of men.

26. Ah, my beloved brethren and sisters! let us just consider what miserable slaves we were by nature of sin and the devil; but he,

who is the Son of the Most High God, King of kings and Lord of lords, whom all the angels reverence, has taken charge of us and become our Saviour, has redeemed, washed and purified us, has clothed us in the garment of salvation and brought us into the house of his church, brought us in the Spirit to the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God, has fallen in love with us as with his bride, and chosen us for his own. O what a display of unmerited grace and inexpressible mercy. O let us love him and cleave to him in faith, knowing at all times, with the psalmist, that our help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth: he will not suffer our feet to be moved; for he who keepeth us, shall neither slumber nor sleep. Ps. 121. No man can pluck us out of his hand (John 10); therefore be of good cheer and faint not in bodily tribulations: think of him who endured such contradiction of sinners, despised the shame, and being made perfect through sufferings, has set down at the right hand of God, and makes intercession for the church militant, till the sun of grace shall set, when he shall appear in judgment and in flaming fire, to take vengeance upon all them that obeyed not his gospel. Then shall his church militant, with all her members, triumph over sin, death and the devil, and shall sing forth the triumphant song, Death is swallowed up in victory. O

death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? And we will thank God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

Now I commit you unto God and to his love. Oh that this love may ever continue to burn with fervor in our hearts to the praise of God, in time and eternity, through Jesus Christ. Amen. Which is the earnest desire and prayer of your servant and brother in the faith and in the church of Jesus Christ, which exists throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. 3: 21.

APPENDIX.

At the request of many of my brethren and friends, I have been induced to append to this book a short sketch of my life, stating in few words the manner in which a gracious God bore mercifully with me from my youth, and finally called me from darkness to light, and delivered me, without the least merit of my own, from the power of satan through the blood of my Redeemer, to whom alone be the praise for ever and ever.

Moreover, I feel myself the more inclined to make known my calling, inasmuch as my brethren and I have often been accused of having entered upon the formation of our society, purely from motives of envy or caprice, and not in consequence of a divine calling or a heavenly impulse ; though the Lord knows there is no ground for such accusation. However, it is not done on my own account, or for the reason that I cannot, by the help of God, bear such accusation with patience, because I have learned that all these things work together for good ; but for the sake of others who perhaps are withheld by these means from examining, or taking properly to heart the true grounds of our separation. Therefore, in order to honor God and advance the welfare of my neighbor, I will recount, with succinctness and in child-like simplicity, the good things which the Lord has

done for my soul ; the desire of my heart is, that all men may experience like grace with me, through Jesus Christ, blessed for ever. Amen.

In the first place, I must confess with the psalmist, that in sin my mother conceived me, and that I was shapen in iniquity, (Ps. 51 : 5,) and that all my intents and devices were vain from my youth ; but on the other hand I must praise Almighty God for his grace in calling upon me from my youth, and oftentimes giving me convictive evidence that it was my imperious duty to take heed and beware of sin. Though my mental powers were but slightly developed, yet my mind was often deeply impressed by the admonitions of my father ; for, thanks be to God, he gave us much good advice from our tender years, showing us, from the holy scriptures, the evil nature and fearful tendency of sin, and explaining, moreover, that it was incumbent upon us to know, by the grace of God, what things are sinful and avoid them, and through faith and repentance to lay hold on Christ, and be justified through him alone. This was to me, at that time, entirely incomprehensible. Would to God that all parents might observe this towards their children ; I believe it would be attended with a happy result, even if the parents should not live to see it.

About the twelfth or thirteenth year of my age I had a particular warning of God in a vision of the night, in which my eyes were opened to a sense of the multitude and deformity of my sins. I saw plainly that I was already condemned by the justice of God, nay, the most trifling plays appeared to me altogether damnable ; I could see them all spread before me like a roll, every one

accusing me, every one appearing great enough to condemn me. O what extreme anguish and oppressive fear seized upon my soul ! In the midst of my agony I sighed and prayed to God for grace, and made a solemn vow, that, if he would be merciful to me, I would serve him all the days of my life, which thing I firmly resolved to do ; for sin was a terror to me. I thought, if I would have to appear before God and his judgment in this state, O how should I stand ? which judgment was represented to me in another vision. I saw Christ and a great multitude of holy angels descending from heaven in great glory ; the archangel blew the trumpet of God ; the dead arose ; all nations were gathered before the judgment seat of Christ, and with eyes intent they gazed upon the judge, waiting in suspense the issue of their sentence ; I saw the righteous ascend to meet the Lord in the air, after the voice was heard, Come, &c. My father, who was standing at my side, was also taken up ; I looked after him, as Elisha did after Elijah, but was unable to follow ; he called to me, when he was near Christ, to come after him ; but I replied, I cannot till I am called. The anguish of my soul was extreme ; I looked with piteous eyes upon the judge, if, haply, I might incline him in compassion to call me also ; but I trembled every instant for fear he would say, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, which fire I supposed to be the earth and the elements, which would be changed in the twinkling of an eye into a lake of brimstone, for the punishment of ungodly men. In this agony of mind I awoke. Any person may imagine the state of my feeling ; I thought I must

surely be lost ; I called upon God, as far as I was able, but was afraid he would not hear my prayer. I was very much concerned for my brothers and sisters, (as also for all men) for I perceived that they also were sinners as well as myself, and were not aware of their situation ; I was afraid they would have to perish along with me, so much so, that it appeared to be incumbent upon me to open my mind to them, and warn them of their sins ; but in this I hesitated. At length, however, I explained myself in writing, and presented to their view the horror which the judgment to come would carry with it to the minds of the unprepared. Having finished the writing, I left it lying on the table, and went out of doors weeping. In a short time I became very much ashamed, and wished I had not done so ; I was very loath to go into the house again ; for I thought they would all be looking at me ; yet it was nothing but a temptation. When I went in, my father addressed me affectionately, and made inquiry concerning the state of my mind. But, influenced by fear, I made no reply ; for, if I related to him what I had seen, I was apprehensive that he might perhaps say that I labored under a delusion, which would have greatly increased the intensity of my anguish ; nevertheless he continued to address me, and brought to view the promises of Christ, &c., but I could not obtain any consolation.

A few days after I disclosed my feelings to my mother, telling her how it was with me, and what I had seen, and that I was afraid there was no mercy for me. She then talked to me, comforted me with many words, and charged me to cleave to God and follow his calling, and so he would

not forsake me; upon this I made a firm resolve never more to sin wilfully against God. But, alas, much resolved and little done! For it happened, after God had imparted some consolation, and I had hopes he would yet be merciful, that the terror of future judgment began to vanish by degrees, youthful lusts were revived, shame and bashfulness gained the ascendancy, I was afraid to confess Christ, and in this way I at length approved again of things, which before were an abomination, yet not without remorse. My conscience accused me very sharply at first, representing my former feelings and my promises to God, at the same time reminding me, that, if I died in that condition, I must be eternally lost; nevertheless I considered it impossible for me to resist. Thus, miserable sinner that I was, the longer the more deeply I became involved in sins; as I increased in years I increased also in sin, yet God by his grace did not leave me entirely without convictions. O my feelings, when I think upon the everlasting mercy of God, how long he bore in patience with me, faithless rebel, and how long I offended and provoked him to whet his sword to wrath to make me, an example of his vengeance. But he had better things in store for me; he called me, he convinced me of my unrighteousness; at times he presented to my view death, judgment and the condemnation of the ungodly, at times the grace of the gospel and the eternal beatitude and glory of heaven: but all was insufficient, at that time, to humble my proud and haughty heart. I went on in sin, in vain lies, in flaunting, in parade and rioting, in frivolity and sensuality; I feared neither God nor his word, I followed the way of the world

and the prince of the power of the air. Behold, so shamefully did I withstand the grace of God and spend my juvenile days in sin ; I could speak presumptuously against light and knowledge, well aware that I was on the broad way that leadeth to hell. One time as I and some others were riding together from a volatile company, my horse took fright, and, not being able to hold him, he ran off, and stumbling, threw me more than a rod from him on the hard frozen ground, without doing me any further injury. O, I thought to myself, if I was now killed, nothing less than eternal destruction would be my portion ! But, the danger past, I lived as before ; if any young person died, it made me partially afraid ; for I thought, perhaps it will soon be my turn, and if death was to come, how could I stand before the awful judgment ! I thought, at times, if I get sick I will repent and pray earnestly to God for grace, and it may be that he will show me mercy. Now it happened that I took sick of a pretty severe fever, but could feel no repentance, no sorrow for my sins. By this God gave me to understand that he alone had the power of giving repentance ; and I was convinced that it did not depend upon my running or willing, but upon the mercy of God. But all was of no avail ; for after recovery I made still further advances in sin, being more exposed to vain and frivolous company, though my parents frequently rebuked me ; I thought, however, that as long as I remained single it would be impossible for me to do otherwise. Yea, I often wished (but dreadfully, when I think upon it) that my parents had never given me religious instructions, as I saw that other parents gave their

children every liberty, even setting them a pattern in sin ; nay, I wished, at times, that I had never obtained any light from God, that I might be entirely ignorant ; because I believed my accountability would not be so great. O, my soul is amazed when I recall this to mind. O how desperately wicked is the heart of man when in possession of satan. O that all men might take warning by me, and not so withstand the grace of God. O God, remember not the sins of my youth, nor my daily transgressions, but remember me in thy great mercy.

In this my season of levity I often thought, that if God would preserve me till I was married, I would then serve him better. But what is the resolution of man ? I at length got married, and soon saw that my purpose was vain ; for now I had a family to provide for, now came the cares of the world and business of various kinds with which I was occupied ; but it appeared to me that I had no time to devote to the one thing needful. O the miserable condition of man !

The second year after I was married, my brother-in-law was seized with an inflammatory fever, lost his reason, and in this condition passed into eternity ; this circumstance made a deep impression upon my mind. I was convinced that if I was thus to be snatched into eternity, I should be irretrievably lost. O, I thought, what a miserable fool I am, to live thus in contrariety to the will of God, not knowing what instant death may overtake me. At this time I formed a new resolution to follow my convictions ; but it was of short duration ; I was ashamed to acquaint my wife, much less other people, with my intention,

because I perceived that, if I followed my convictions, it would be necessary for me to make an entire change in the regulation of my household : but then it appeared to me that, if I would no longer permit vain and trifling liberties, neither hired man nor maid would stay with me, and how then could I keep house.

From this time my father grew more and more infirm, and his life hastened rapidly to a conclusion ; then his admonitions came frequently into my mind, as he had often given us warnings and exhortations from a tender age ; the powerful call made in my youth, my promise to God, and how shamefully I transgressed and consented to sin, were oftentimes so plainly presented to my view, that I was constrained to groan and say to myself, Miserable man that I am, who have deserved a damnation two-fold greater than others, in that I have sinned so outrageously against light and knowledge. For I supposed that others, though more under the dominion of the works of the flesh than myself, would yet have less to answer for, inasmuch as I believed they were more ignorant, (nevertheless ignorance justifies no man before God.) Notwithstanding all these convictions I still remained too much in the old way. About this time my father gave us his last earnest admonition in taking leave of us at his departure into eternity. He said among other words : My dear children, I have often warned and faithfully counselled you that you should fear God and invoke him for grace, but hitherto it has had no effect ; you have not harkened to me, you have set at nought my counsel, you still live too much in the security of sin, which is a grievous burden

to my heart ; now I go to eternity, and counsel you for the last time ; repent and amend before it is too late ; humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God ; put off the old man which is dead in trespasses and sins, and put on the new man that is fashioned after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, and pray God for his assistance, and he will send you his Spirit, who will strengthen you and guide you in the way of all truth, yea, prepare you for a happy eternity, where we can rejoice with one another in inexpressible joys in the midst of the chosen of God. But if you continue in sin till death, we now shall soon part, and part for ever. Yet, continued he, I do hope that my prayer will not be entirely lost ; but my longing to God is, that he may yet grant you grace to repent, which is my earnest desire and supplication to God, day and night.

This discourse affected my heart to such a degree that I spent almost the whole time I was going home in weeping and supplication. O, I thought, if I could only resign my heart and will to God ! To do this was my earnest desire ; but the cross was still in the way. I would gladly have become a follower of Christ, if I could, at the same time, have retained the friendship of the world. I studied seriously whether I could not serve God in secret, without making it known to any person, but I found that this was not sufficient ; for frequently (when I was desirous of concealing my convictions) I felt condemned in my own mind. Hence I avoided trifling company more and more ; still I was ashamed to confess Christ, which often occasioned great self-accusation and remorse of conscience, to think I was so

unfaithful to God. Behold the obstinacy of my self-will! Shortly after this my father died. About this time I became acquainted with some persons who were in an enquiring and distressed condition. I made known to them the state of my mind, and received in return a considerable portion of comfort; but afterwards I encountered great opposition. Satan, the world and the flesh made a powerful assault, and represented to me that it would be impossible for me to get through the world, if I lived such a life as I was well convinced was the duty of a follower of Jesus; and even if I would do so for a length of time, I would not persevere, but after a while I would grow luke-warm and careless, as in my first call. Here I had a great struggle; I wished betimes I had not opened my mind to any person; then I thought again, poor wretch that I am! would it not be better to live with God in the greatest poverty and despicability, than to live with the world in the greatest pleasure, and at last go to hell? Thus, finding no rest in my conscience, I was tossed to and fro for a considerable length of time, like a ship without a rudder. I groaned and prayed to God that he would cleanse me in the blood of Jesus, and grant me faith so that I might be able to withstand all the buffetings of satan; but in all this I did not follow my calling as I should have done, for which reason my prayer was without power, being always mixed with doubt, mistrust, and want of faith, so that I thought I could never be able to do what was right, I might just as well go on with the world in the old way of the flesh, &c.

About this time I built my barn, at the raising

of which one man lost his life, and another was made a cripple; which accident made a very powerful impression upon my mind; I thought it might have happened on account of my sins. I prayed to God anew with a longing and ardent desire that he would yet look upon me in mercy and pardon my sins. Some weeks after I was very near falling off the building, which circumstance alarmed me very much. I thanked God with a sincere heart for his mercy in rescuing me from temporal and eternal death.

Behold, so long did my flesh and sinful will withhold me from God. I was desirous of being freed from my sins; but entirely to deny my own will and take up the cross of Christ, was always a doctrine too hard for me, till once, when I was revolving my condition in mind, I saw how long I halted between two opinions, and what would finally be my portion. Then it appeared to me as if I was upon my deathbed, my neighbors and friends stood around; they gave me the parting hand, and bewailed my departure, without being able to afford me any consolation; I looked upon them a picture of sorrow; my conscience told me, thou hadst greater love for men than for God, their honor was dearer to thee than his honor; the preservation of their friendship was thy aim, therefore the enmity of God abideth against thee; now thou art constrained to forsake them, and God will forsake thee; they cannot help thee, therefore thou criest, and he hears thee not, but leaves thee to eat the fruit of thy own way and be filled with thy own devices. Prov. 1. What would it profit thee now, even if thou hadst gained the whole world, and lost thy poor soul?

Or what wouldst thou give in exchange for thy soul? O miserable fool! wilt thou waste more time in deliberating? Wilt thou halt still longer between two opinions? If the Lord is God, then serve him; if Baal or the world, then serve it. To this remonstrance my soul made answer, What is the world, friends, honor, and things of sense, but an empty shadow that passes away and leaves no trace behind; ought I to riot any longer therein, and feed myself on vanity? Ah no, I have sought too long to satisfy myself therewith, and still remain an empty, ruined and defective soul: it is Jesus alone and his blood that is able to satisfy me and make me perfect in him. Ah, here my will was bowed, nought was my choice but Christ and his cross, which I was now willing to bear. Now, I said, I will follow thee, if nobody else will; for thou art the only and the true friend, who can help me in time and eternity. Then, methought, I heard Christ say, Who are my friends but them that do the will of my Father, the same are my mother, my sisters and my brothers. O what consolation did I not derive from these words! My soul was transported, as it were, in ecstasy of love and joy; I felt as if they had been addressed to myself, and as though Christ, out of fraternal love and compassion, had received me into the number of his friends. Oh, how vain and insignificant did the ungodly appear! the righteous how grand and illustrious! I saw Christ so powerful in them, and his word so vivifying, that I no longer wondered how it came that the martyrs were so joyful amidst the most cruel and barbarous tortures, and so steadfast even unto death; because they

had respect to the recompense of reward. Ah, I said to myself, how long have I held to two opinions, desiring to serve both God and mammon! How much remorse, how many accusings of conscience had I to endure! O, miserable sinner, had I long since followed Christ, taken his easy yoke upon me, yea, borne it from my youth, I had long since tasted this sweetness; for what is sweeter than the love of Christ? what more refreshing than to be taken into his bosom? and what more thrilling than to hear, Peace be with thee, thy sins are forgiven! O I thought I should never more be dejected. But, ah, when the Lord hid the light of his countenance from me, I sank into weakness; new temptations befel me, against which I had to contend, and which would be too tedious to enumerate. Yet divine grace, through faith in Jesus and his promises, always gave me the victory, and I increased continually in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and his doctrine: to God alone be the praise, for ever and ever, Amen.

At this time I and some others assembled together at times, in order to admonish and strengthen one another in the love of God and his word. For we saw clearly by the light of Christ and his doctrine, that in christendom there was a great apostacy from God, and that almost all flesh took its own way on the earth; for pride, vanity, lying and deceit, suing and going to law, party spirit and striving for worldly superiority increased in appearance from day to day, even among those who boast of a christian faith opposed to the use of weapons, offensive or defensive. They would not take sword in hand against their enemies, but they bore it in their

mouth against the opposite party, in order to overcome them. One party persecuted another with invectives and calumny, so great a tongue-war and contention arising therefrom, that neighbor often detested neighbor, and friend, friend; for both parties strove by falsehood and misrepresentation to make themselves strong against the day of general election, which would decide the mighty contest. Considering all these things one with another by the doctrine and spirit of Christ, we perceived clearly, that not only the protestant churches and great sects who approve the use of the sword, but also those who style themselves indefensive, depend upon the arm of flesh, having their hearts turned away from the Lord, an evil greatly to be lamented. Ah, the vail of Moses is upon their heart, and remains untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. 2 Cor. 3.

Together with these things we observed the carnal, vain and haughty life of baptized members, their living in the lust of the world and of the flesh, which I often observed and experienced in my time; for I have been in company with the old, middle aged, and young men (who, as they supposed, had received baptism upon their own confession) in drinking and rioting, where a person could hear nothing but the world, jests, folly, buffoonery and uninstructional discourses, though we should let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may administer grace unto the hearers. Eph. 4: 29. Eph. 5: 4.

As regards myself, I am free to confess before God and man, that at that time I lived without

APPENDIX.

God and his word, and was going the broad way of the flesh that leadeth to destruction; this I have since felt in its full weight. At the same time I was sensible that such baptized and defenceless members (as they styled themselves) were no more circumspect in their walk than myself, as was evidenced by their fruits; though by repentance they should already have arisen through faith from the dead works of the flesh, before they were baptized, and thus through faith, have, in baptism, buried their sins into the death of Christ, and consequently have walked with him in newness of life. Rom. 6. From all this we could plainly discover that the teachers must be blind and asleep to their charge, at the time that it is their duty to watch; for they do not examine the men, before baptism, whether they have been brought from death to life, and from the bondage of sin to the obedience of righteousness, so that (on account of the forgiveness of their sins) they may have the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But they baptise them while they are yet the servants of sin and death; hence no good fruit is to be expected, even after the baptism, as long as they remain unconverted. Therefore Christ says, Either make the tree good and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O ye generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Matt. 12: 33, 34.

Had the Mennonist teachers in our day possessed the Spirit of God, like Menno Simon, and

carried out their doctrine to the same extent, we would never have separated from them. For he speaks of baptism as follows, (page 41st): "Attend to the word of the Lord; the apostle Paul, who did not receive his gospel from man, but from God, informs us, That as Christ died and was buried, so we also should die unto our sins, and be buried with Christ in baptism; not that it behooves us to do this after baptism, but we must have commenced and accomplished all this beforehand, even as he says, If we are planted with him to a like death, we shall have with him a like resurrection, knowing that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be done away: for he that is dead is free from sin, and as Christ, having once died and taken away sin, lives now unto God, so all true christians die also unto their sins and live unto God."

Further, writing to the despisers of baptism, he holds this language, (page 75): "Think not that we place so much stress upon the element and the ceremony; I speak the truth in Christ and lie not; if any man, whether emperor or king, was to come to me with the desire of being baptized, if he still walked in the impure, ungodly lusts of the flesh, if the blameless, penitent, and new life was wanting, I hope by the grace of God that I would choose rather to die than to baptise such an impenitent, carnal minded person. For where the renovating and revivifying faith which leads to repentance, does not exist, there is no baptism; as Philip said to the Eunuch, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. Acts 8. But it is necessary that you should understand, in addition, that if the candidate for bap-

tism comes forward with a deceitful heart in the appearance of faith, his hypocrisy is reckoned for sin, not to the baptizer, but to the subject himself." So much for Menno.

But that the teachers of the present time are not imposed upon by appearance and feigned piety, is easily seen; if a person should haply endeavor to exculpate himself in this way. For if this was the case, they would separate themselves from them after their fruits became manifest, and would have no company with them, that they might be ashamed, (2 Thess. 3. 1 Cor. 5. Matt. 18,) which thing is not practised, as is well known.

The twenty-eighth article of the christian faith of the Mennonists reads thus: Concerning christian punishment and the separation of offending members, it is confessed as follows, namely, that as a house or city cannot subsist without doors, gates and walls, (or a good police) through and by which wicked persons are driven and fastened out, but the good and upright retained and protected; so Christ (for the sustentation of his church) has given her the key of heaven, (which is his word) that by and through the same all persons under her jurisdiction, who are found to offend in doctrine or conversation; (that is, to act in contrariety to any commandment and ordinance given by God to his church) may receive sentence of punishment in the spirit of truth, for their amelioration; and the disobedient be thus separated from her community, to the end that the church may not (by their false doctrine and impure conversation) be soured, contaminated and made participant of their sins; and that it

may strike a terror into the righteous, so as to restrain them from the commission of similar offences.

Likewise in the 29th article it is confessed, that as the separating is commanded by God, in order to reclaim the sinner and preserve the purity of the church; so hath God likewise commanded and ordained that a person should withdraw from and avoid the separated member, that he may be made ashamed and his life be amended. This withdrawing proceeds from the separation, being a fruit and evidence of the same, without which the separation is null and void of effect; it is therefore the duty of believers to observe and maintain this ordinance in regard to the persons separated. This withdrawing consists in withholding from them the spiritual communion of the supper, the evangelic salutation, the kiss of peace, together with what appertains thereto: it is, moreover, incumbent to withdraw from them in all temporal and secular affairs, as eating, drinking, buying and selling, daily walk and intercourse, together with the attending circumstances; and no person should be excused or excepted, whether husband or wife, parent or child, or any other relation.

In the 27th article concerning the magistracy it is confessed, that the magistracy is an ordinance and institution of God, who has ordained and established such power in all countries, &c. Whoever wishes to read the whole, is at liberty to do so. But at the close it is confessed, that as Christ set an example to believers in avoiding all the grandeur of the world, and exhibiting himself in the form of a servant; so it is incum-

bent upon all his followers to take no part in the administration of the magisterial office, or any branch of it, following in this also the example of Christ and his apostles, under whose churches (as every well informed person knows) these specified offices were not administered.

Dear reader, observe how far the Mennonists have departed from their original principles. The separation of offending members is practised very seldom; the shunning of the separated has fallen entirely into disuse, at least in our part of the world, as far as my information extends. The article last cited says, that it is incumbent upon the followers of Christ to take no part in the administration of the magisterial office or any branch of it. Now the Mennonists, though they may be unwilling to hold an office themselves, yet they assist others in getting into office, are free to sit in courts of justice and pronounce sentence of guilty or not guilty upon prisoners arraigned at the bar, sue and go to law, repel force with force; and all in direct contrariety to the doctrine of Christ and the principles of their own confession of faith, which I could abundantly illustrate with proof from the holy scripture, nay, I have already explained it in my writings, and even teachers have frequently confessed to me that this state of things ought not to be, and that they themselves had no such freedom. But notwithstanding all this they leave the matter rest, and with deep regret be it said, they proceed according to their former usage, not considering that they will have to render an account to God, when the blood of their hearers will be required at their hands.

For as much as we clearly perceived, as above mentioned, that this church was far departed from her first love and from the fundamental principles of christian faith, and had thus fallen short of the true doctrine, so that most generally every one sought his own and not the things of Jesus, which, it is to be feared, is too much the case at the present day in regard to all sects; therefore I and several others were unable to see any other way, according to the tenor of the word of God, than with Noah, Abraham, Moses, the prophets and true Israelites, the apostles and witnesses of the truth, to separate ourselves from all unrighteousness and false doctrine, and in our secession to abide alone in God and his word, and to pray to God that he would grant us, and all sincere souls, a greater and greater knowledge of the way of truth, which is Christ, and that he would send forth faithful laborers into his harvest.

One day I was greatly distressed in spirit in regard to myself and other afflicted souls, because I perceived clearly that great numbers were miserably deluded. I besought God to have mercy upon me and upon every mourning soul, and to take upon him the care of his scattered flock, in accordance with his promise. The evening of the same day my heart was so oppressed and afflicted on account of the decadency of the christian church, that I prayed God with burning tears and ardent desires, to have mercy upon us and send forth faithful laborers, shepherds and teachers, who might feed his people with the doctrine of truth. And while I was engaged in prayer the following answer was given me in the Spirit: Thy constant prayer and desire to God is, that he

would prepare others for this work; but thou dost not yield thyself to God, as clay to the potter, that he may form of thee in time and eternity that which is pleasing in his sight. This was a severe stroke. I wept before God, and for some time had nothing to say; but b. and by I felt my will entirely sunk in God, so that I answered, Here am I, Lord, do with me in time and eternity that which is pleasing in thy sight; thy will be done in me; prepare me according to thy good pleasure.

After this I went to bed: I could not sleep, but sighed constantly to God. Instantly, being in a vision, I was in the midst of a spacious field, and saw, in a peculiar manner, the fallen condition of christendom. The numerous sects were represented as many decayed buildings, the walls of which were full of breaches, and there was no man who stood in the chasm. As I was gazing upon this, I received a command from Christ to engage in the work of the Lord, to pull down, break to pieces, build, plant, &c. before the coming of the great and notable day of the Lord. When I came to myself, I wondered very much at the vision, and being greatly perplexed, I groaned and prayed to the Lord, and said, O God, if it is thy holy will to make choice of me, a poor, unworthy sinner, for this important service, and to make me, who am the least among those who fear thee, an instrument in thy Almighty hand for the promotion of thy honor and for the melioration of the condition of my fellow men; grant me then, O God, the influence of thy Holy Spirit, and the pure and undefiled wisdom which is concealed in Christ, my Lord, and which

was present with thee in all thy works, and still is present; permit the same to accompany me, O God, that in the integrity of my heart I may walk circumspectly before thee in thy truth, and live no longer unto myself but unto thee, O God, in Jesus Christ, my Lord. I spent perhaps an hour in supplication to God, when, suddenly, I stood in the place I had been before, saw the same things, and heard the same command. At length I recovered myself; completely confounded and in tears, I earnestly entreated God for his strength, for I thought surely I must sink down in my unworthiness. At last I had a mind to waken my wife, who was asleep, and tell her what I had seen; but as I was about to do this, it appeared to me I should not, but should surrender to God; and immediately I felt myself resigned to his will.

About an hour after, being either in the spirit, or in a vision, (God knows) I was in the midst of a spacious field, not in the same place as the two former times, but in another direction: however I saw the same things as before, with this difference, that there was more shown me here than I had seen the other times; nevertheless I will not mention any thing particularly but the following: there were shown me very elegant stones, all glittering, and exhibiting the appearance of having been fitted to each other, though they lay scattered all about; with these I was to begin the building. There was shown me afterwards in a mountain a vast number of rough and unhewn stones, which I was to quarry out; this being (as was shown me) all that I could do with them; after they came out of the mountain they

were changed by the influence of an invisible power, and received a shape and brilliancy similar to those I had first seen. This afforded me great joy and encouragement in building; for I perceived that these stones, so beautifully dressed, fitted one another like the stones in Solomon's Temple, so that neither hammer nor iron instrument was required on the building. From this I was conveyed to another place, where I observed a large door at the entrance of an abyss, upon which Christ set his foot, and laying his hands upon his breast, he looked up to heaven and cried with a loud voice, Now is the mystery of God fulfilled and eternity sealed up. And presently I heard a terrific sound as of awful and loud crashing thunder, the earth was convulsed, heaven and the elements were moved from their place and began to vanish away. Having come to, I lay in great agitation; laboring under the impression that my dissolution was at hand; I wept and sighed to God for help and assistance; I prayed for the influence of the Holy Spirit to enable me to stand before his omnipotent justice and be controlled by his will.

It was now my belief that God had called me to his work; yet not that I should trust entirely to this vision, but that I should wait and see what God would further have me do. For I was convinced, if the call was divine, that God would dispose of me according to his righteous will; to which will I now resigned myself, that it might be done in me. I now opened my mind to my wife on condition that she should tell nobody, lest my brethren might think that God had called me to the ministry, or, perhaps, desire me to

teach, which at this time I could not consent to; for it was my firm belief that, when it pleased God to make me an instrument in his hand, he would control me at his own time, and clothe me with more power from on high.

After a considerable length of time my brethren and I considered it for our good to meet together with more formality, that is, first, to sing a spiritual song in praise of God, agreeably to the injunction of Paul, who instructs us to admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5: 19); secondly, with united prayer to supplicate God for his grace and blessing: thirdly, that we all should speak our minds in a sincere and childlike manner, according to the manifestation of the Spirit, but in succession, since God is a God of order: and fourthly, to conclude our meeting with prayer, thanksgiving and a spiritual song. My brethren now desired me to conduct the service—a very grievous request indeed, for I found myself extremely weak and unworthy in regard to the undertaking, wherefore I endeavored to excuse myself for this time; but they, in reply, asserted as their firm belief that God had called me to the work. At last I consented to this, that I would take the precedence in our mutual exhortations, if the Lord would impart somewhat of instruction, and that every one, notwithstanding, should take the liberty of making known, in simplicity of spirit, his own feelings and experience. In this way we met together for a good while, and obtained the blessing of God; our hearts were confirmed in love towards God and one another, till at

length some persons accused us of holding our meetings so privately, adding that if there was anything good we ought to let others partake of it. This accusation made, at first, a powerful impression upon us; yet we prayed fervently to God that he would not forsake us, but lead us at will, that being neither too hasty nor too tardy, we might walk in all things according to his good pleasure.

If any one should ask the reason why we held our meetings privately, knowing that Christ says, He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John 3: 21.

I answer, that the sole reason is, that I ever considered myself too incompetent, for the time being, to act as a public teacher; for on one side I saw the danger a person in the ministry is exposed to, the temptations to be encountered within and without, the weakness and diffidence of my juvenile years, the craft and subtility of many men; so that I lay frequently under a heavy pressure, and prayed fervently to God to manifest his gracious will, and instruct me in what I should do; for my sole desire was to do his will in Christ Jesus.

On the other hand I saw the disordered condition of poor christendom, and the numerous souls held captive therein, as Israel of old in Babylon; yea, I perceived that the Lord had reason to complain, as he did of Israel in former times, I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they

should have turned from their evil ways, and from the evil of their doings. Jeremiah 23.

At last I gave up to put my talent to usury according as God imparted to me the measure of faith, by the influence of his Spirit, to him alone be the praise, who has at all times comforted and supported me in all the infirmities under which I have frequently groaned. Yes, from the depth of my soul I thank the everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, who granted me blessing, power and success in speaking his word without timidity, and made it fruitful in the hearts of many, who, by the hearing of the word have been brought to believe, yea, have been turned, through Jesus, from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God. So that I began (as mentioned) to labor at this holy city and temple, not only with the word of repentance and faith, but also with the holy baptism, supper, footwashing and all the apostolic ordinances, and to join the fallen and scattered stones (which were shewn me in the vision) together again for a spiritual body and temple of the Lord. Moreover, the Lord of mercy rendered me assistance, by the word of his power, in bringing the rough and unshapen stones from the mountain of sublimity and carnal reason; which stones, through the hidden power of the Holy Spirit, were, and daily are, changed, hewn or dressed, and made brilliant by the rays of Eternal Light; to the eternal and only wise God, the Father of mercies and all good, be alone the honor and the praise, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever, Amen.

From all this every candid inquirer may infer that our society did not originate from motives

of envy or caprice, as we are accused, but from a divine impulse, through the power of the Spirit of God. And on the other hand, if you impartially consider the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and examine the confessions of the in-defensive and holy martyrs, you will find that we have commenced nothing new, nothing but what you have heard from the beginning, though at the present time it appears new; for it has always been the case, when the light of truth has broken forth, that darkness has not comprehended it, but opposed and exclaimed against it as being selfishness, sedition, and a deceptive spirit, as history and the holy scripture abundantly show. But, be this as it may, truth remains truth, and the same all the candid take to heart. Therefore be of good cheer and fear not, all ye who have known the truth: for the Lord is our strength and our refuge in the day of affliction. Jer. 16: 19. All those who revile and persecute us for the truth's sake, shall finally be ashamed and be as nothing. Is. 41: 11, 12. Therefore my dearly beloved and chosen children, who are scattered abroad in the world, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious; I, your unworthy servant, exhort you with Paul, by the mercy of God, that you preserve that which is committed to your care, and walk irreproachably in the calling whereunto God hath called you, that you may walk worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in all humility and meekness, in temperance, christian modesty, and true selfdenial: fulfil the commandments of our Lord, love your neighbor as yourself; do to others as you would wish to be done by; be compassionate and faith-

ful towards all men, be merciful as your Father in heaven is also merciful; love one another, as Christ loved you and still loves, if you abide in him; forgive one another, as he has forgiven you; let the word of Christ dwell richly among you in all wisdom; use unprofitable words sparingly, but in abundance those that are good to the use of edifying, that they may administer grace to the hearers; grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed against the day of redemption: use the world in moderation and regularity: act honorably in all your dealings and occupations; lay up treasure in heaven that waxes not old, for the fashion of this world passeth away. O my beloved children in Christ, the times are dangerous; satan, the world, and our own flesh strive to rob us of our divine and saving faith, and make us cold in love. Oh lift up your heads and watch; for, lo, some have fallen already, and are again entangled in the world; wherefore lay not down your weapons, fight the more manfully, and faint not. He who has called you and chosen you out of the world, will most surely (if you abide in him) preserve this pledge for you against the last day. O reflect upon the exceeding riches in Christ Jesus; in him are found all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God, all consolation and felicity, so that all the afflictions of the present time are nothing in comparison of the glory which a person even here frequently perceives in the spirit, and which shall be hereafter revealed, and which I, poor and unworthy being, have often tasted and experienced through grace. Amen, hallelu-

jah, salvation and praise be unto him that was, and is, and liveth forever and ever.

I will now conclude; and I desire the candid reader to receive from me, in the spirit of charity, this confession of my illumination, conversion and vocation, and consider it in a proper light; for, as the Lord knows, I seek no honor by it, but have made it entirely for the reasons above mentioned. Him that feareth God consider thou.

J. H.

